

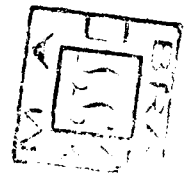


# **THE FRENCH AND THE NORTHERN STATES**

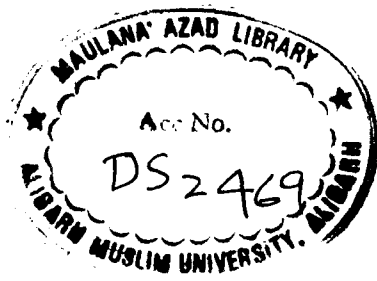
Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of  
**Master of Philosophy**  
IN  
**HISTORY**

by  
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Under the supervision of  
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Reader



**CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
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1992**



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18th Feb., 1992

This is to certify that the dissertation  
on "The French and the Northern States" submitted  
by Mr. Asim Kumar is the original work of the  
candidate and is suitable for submission for  
the award of M.Phil. degree.

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THE FRENCH AND THE NORTHERN STATES

**TO MY PARENTS**

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## P R E F A C E

The object of this work is to place before the reader, the vital connection and interaction between the political developments of France and North India as well as the response of the British East India administration during 1789 to 1815. Throughout the period, the fate of North India depended upon the changing circumstances in France; a fact, which has not attracted adequate attention of writers on Indian History. The Indian policy, did not rely single-handedly upon the native Indian situation. By inevitable force of circumstances, India was drawn into the vortex of European politics. French antagonism of Britain deeply influenced the policy of India House. Malleson had long back discussed some of these developments in his work- Final French Struggles in India and on the Indian Seas. Subsequently S.P. Sen has made valuable contribution in his work entitled: The French in India. Most of the studies have generally concentrated on the French and the Carnatic wars. The exploits and services of the French adventurers in North Indian state and the perception of the French threat to India by the British East India Company administrators have not been adequately dealt with. The present study is an attempt to fill in this gap. I have made use of both the British and French records available in India.

I would like to express my sense of indebtedness to Dr. Raj Kumar Trivedi, my supervisor who has helped me with his invaluable suggestions and guidance. He deepened my

knowledge of the subject through discussions and criticism, and allowed me full freedom to develop my own ideas.

I also take the opportunity to express and acknowledge with gratitude, the help and co-operation given by Professor Z.U. Siddiqui, Chairman, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. It has been my privilege to receive help and co-operation from the faculty members of the department. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. G.K. Gahrana for his encouragement at every step.

I would like to thank the Directors and staff of the National Archives of India, New Delhi, the Pondicherry Archives, Pondicherry, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi, the Librarians and staff of the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh and the Research Seminar Library, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh for allowing me to use their facilities with unfailing courtesy and co-operation.

I thank all my research colleagues for their sympathy and good wishes. I thank Mr. Williams of L.P.K. Guest House and Mr. E.K. Radhakrishnan for their help during my stay at Pondicherry. Lastly I thank Mr. J.P. Chatterjee for typing this work in its present form with great care.

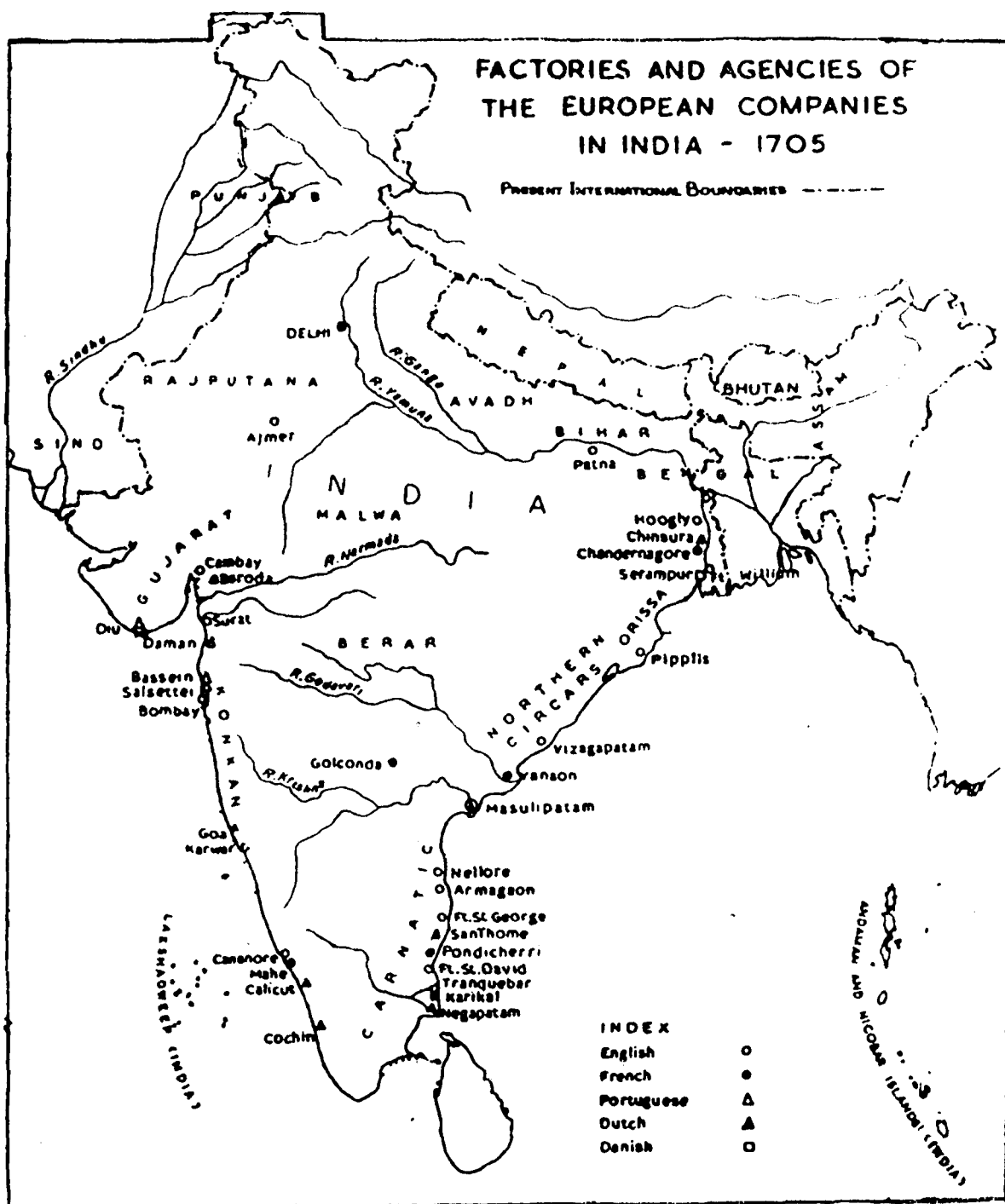
ALIGARH  
FEBRUARY, 1992

ASIM KUMAR



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

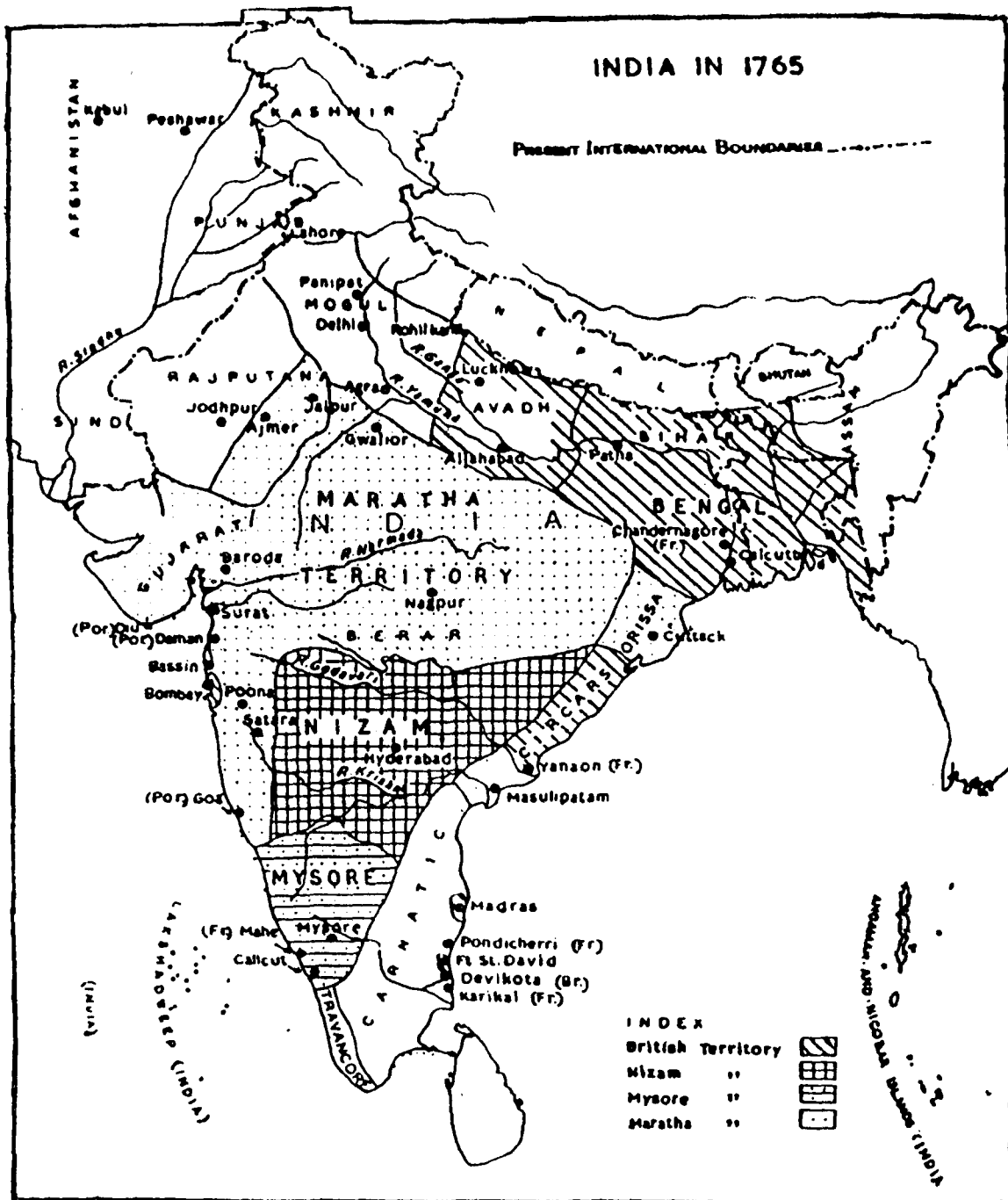
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The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.



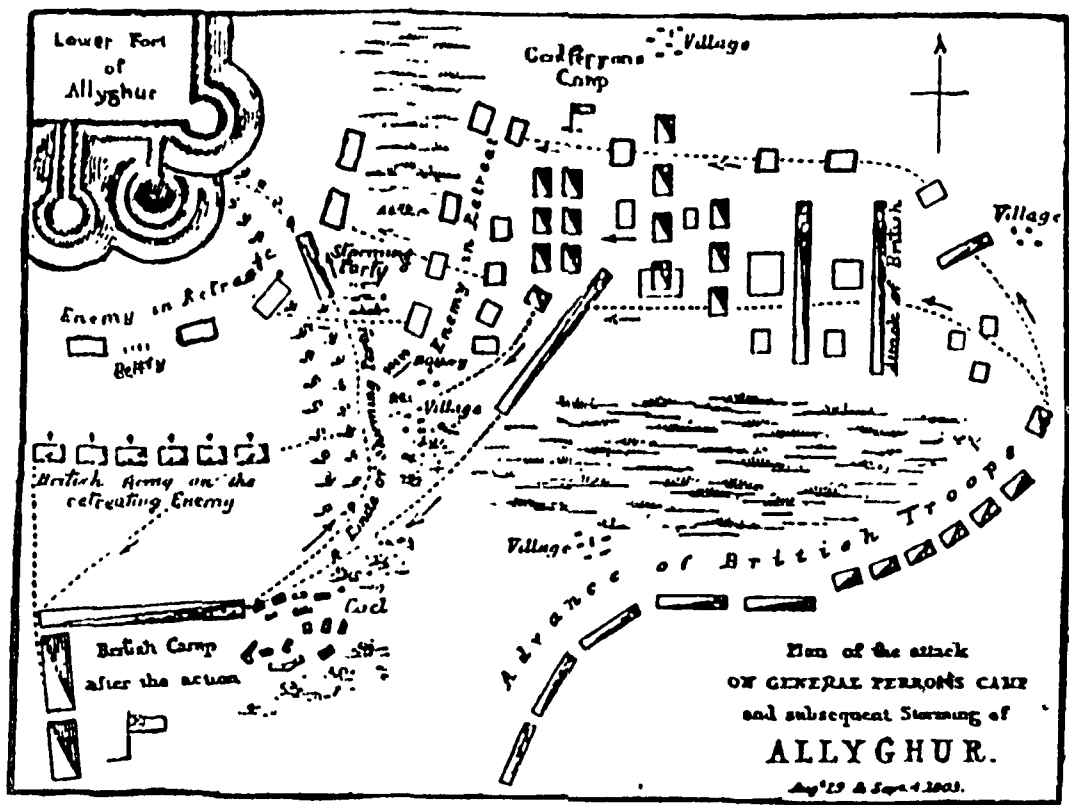
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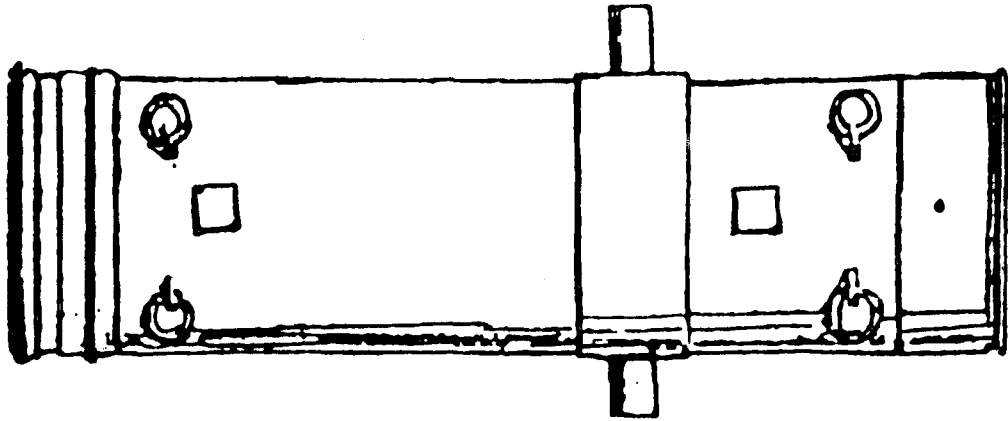
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The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.

Bhutan is a state in special treaty relations with India.

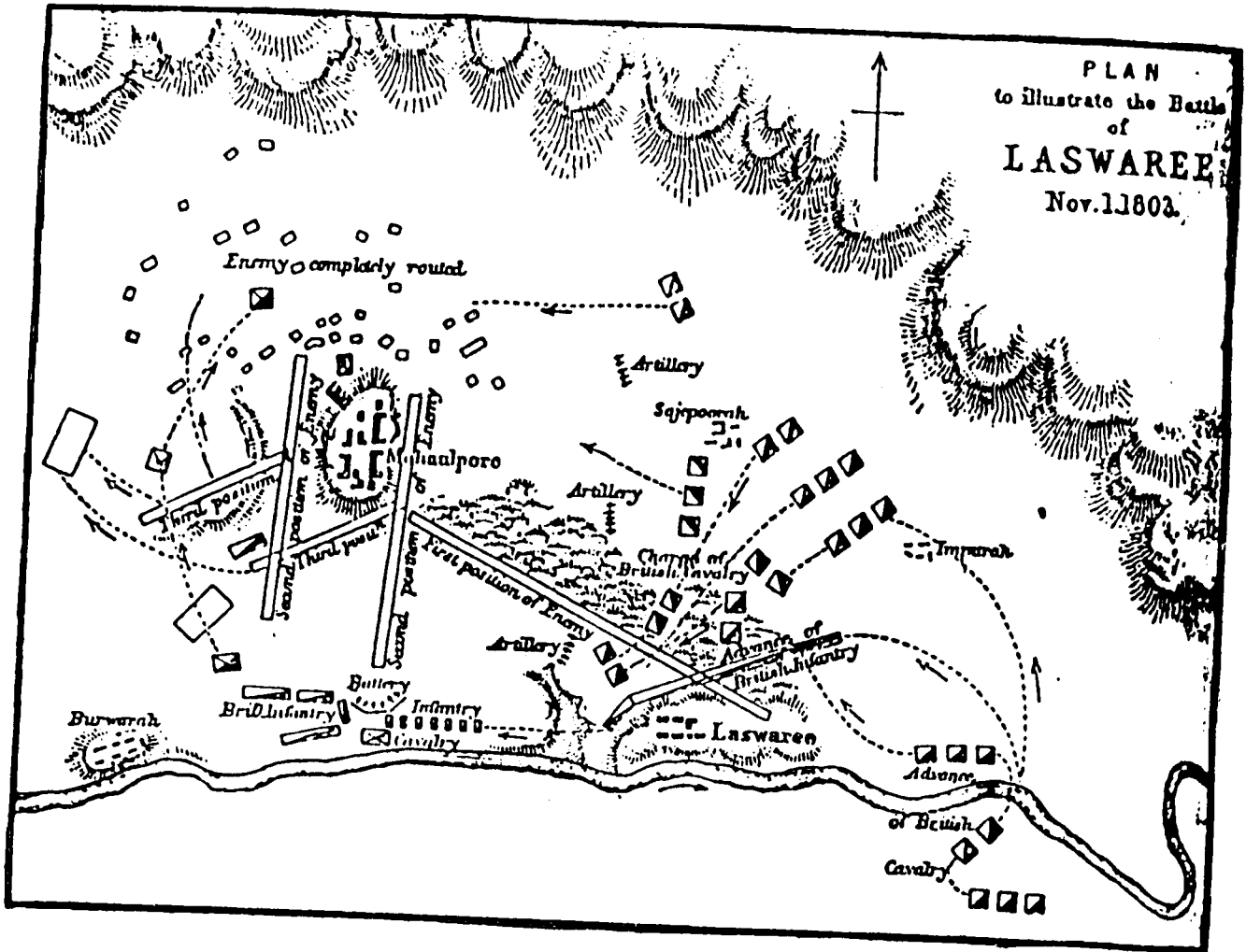






**GREAT GUN AT AGRA.**  
*From Fitzclarence's Journey from India to England.*

PLAN  
to illustrate the Battle  
of  
**LASWAREE**  
Nov. 11 1803.



## Abbreviations

Correspondence	...	Cons.
Department	...	Dept.
Foreign Department	...	F.D.
National Archives of India	...	NAI
Pondicherry Archives	...	PA
Secretary	...	Secy.
Volume	...	Vol.



## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The way India was subjugated by the British has few parallels in history. In India the first contenders were the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and the French. France's interest, in India, started late in the seventeenth century. Like other Europeans, they too, were attracted by the wealth of India.

In 1600, the English East India Company was granted the Royal Charter. Strange it may appear, the company was founded "at a meeting of London merchants in Lord Mayor's parlour, to consider the unchristian price of pepper".<sup>1</sup> Yet, the Royal Charter granted them, 'monopoly of commerce in eastern waters'. In 1602, the United East India Company of the Netherlands was granted the Charter. They were given powers to make treaties, acquire territories and build fortresses. It was also used as an instrument of war and conquest of overseas territories.

The French soldiers of fortune were followed by great travellers like Tavernier and Bernier. It was through their writings that the royal court at Versailles came to know about the Mughals of India at Delhi and Agra. Colbert, the influential minister of Louis XIV guided the economic life

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1. Southgate, G.W., The British Empire and Commonwealth. Dent, 1953, p. 174.

of France. He was acquainted with, these travellers and had even supported them. He even encouraged the founding of the 'Compagnie des Indes Orientales' in 1644. It was founded and financed by the state. Hereafter, French sailors, soldiers, financiers, adventurers and administrators came to India; they were all soldiers of fortune, lured by India's wealth.

The first French factory in India was established at Surat in 1668. Therefore, a factory was built at Masulipatnam in 1669. In 1673, the foundations of Pondicherry were laid down by Francois Martin and Bellanger de Lespinay. Soon, it developed into an important place.

French interest in the north India began in 1674. The factory at Chandernagore was built in 1690-92. The Dutch and the English were their strongest rivals. Consequently, they could not enlarge their interests. The French East India Company was even short of resources. Till 1742, its objectives remained mainly commercial gain. A change in its policy came when Dupleix came to India as the governor of Pondicherry.

Eighteenth century India saw the disintegration of the Mughal empire. Dupleix saw an opportunity for France to lay the foundations of a French empire. He began to exploit the circumstances, took part in local disputes between the two Indian states. He offered support of his troops to these states who sought his help. Consequently he spread the influence of the French East India Company over a vast region in the South India.

These activities of Dupleix were not viewed with favour by the English East India Company, thus began the phase of intense rivalry between the British and the French adventurers in India. Clive was quick to learn from the methods of Dupleix and pursued them more vigourously. He also took advantage of the situation to exploit the contending states. These two companies recruited Indian Soldiers in the army and the services of such foreign trained soldiers were in great demand from the Indian States. Both the English and French exploited this situation, in turn their own rivalry got intensified leading to an armed conflict.

The English were alarmed by the growing influence of the French. Clive was an agent of the rising British middle class, therefore, he received full support from his home country whereas Dupleix and his colleagues received no such support from their country. The English, finally succeeded in crushing the French ambition of a French empire in India.

Hereafter the French adventurers set out for greener pastures in the service of Indian rulers who sought their help in raising a European trained army with modern weapons. Several of the French soldiers, adventurers and administrators got lucrative employment in the north Indian States. A recent work argues that the Indian rulers vied with one another to have French men in their service.<sup>1</sup> The present study seeks to examine their activities and the response of the English East India Company rulers, towards them.

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1. Rose Vincent (ed.), The French in India, 1990 p. 97.

French Revolution of 1789 was a world shaking event. it also affected Chandernagore, the principal French settlement in north India. The Revolutionary slogans of "Equality, Liberty and Fraternity", inspired the people to rise against the autocratic functioning of their governor. The administration of Chandernagore was notorious for its arbitrary character. In their revolutionary zeal, the people of Chandernagore set up a General Assembly of Citizens as well as a National Committee to check the power of governor. They drafted and adopted a constitution and made the governor to function under it and remain loyal to it. Eventually, the governor had to concede all the demands of the National Assembly.

With the outbreak of the revolutionary war in Europe, France entered on a new phase of her history. She was fired with a new mission and her sight was fixed on the Continent. The magnificent successes of her arms against the whole of monarchical Europe, gave her a new euphoria which took many years to pass off. It was only natural that she readily abandoned her overseas possessions in order to concentrate all her vigour and strength in the fulfilment of her new mission in Europe.

At that time Lord Cornwallis, the Governor General was of the view that sooner or later India would be drawn into the vortex of European disturbances since her destiny had

been linked with that of England as a result of battle of Plassey.

In North India, the Scindhia employed the expertise of Europeans, chief of whom were the French. First de Boigne and then Perron modernised the army of Scindhia on the European model. The zenith of French adventurism in India reached during the Governor-Generalship of Sir John Shore who remained non-interventionist as England was involved in strife with the Revolutionary France in Europe.

Sir John Shore's successor Lord Wellesley, assumed charge in 1798. Wellesley's Governor-Generalship synchronised with a critical phase of England's struggle in Europe against the Napoleonic France.

Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798. This expedition was looked upon as a threat to the British power in India. It kept the British administration in India on the red alert. Under these circumstances Lord Wellesley inaugurated his Subsidiary Alliances to expel the French employed in princely states.

He decided that all traces of French influence must be swept aside from India in order to allow no foothold to a French invading army. Lord Wellesley's principal political aim was the destruction of the imaginary French State now formed on the banks of the Jumna under the vice royalty of Perron.

He was of the view that the exclusion of the French would lead to the elevation of the East India Company to the position of a Paramount Power in India.

The conflicting and vacillating policies of the Indian States did not help to establish political stability in India, yet the French with the help of Scindhia, in the face of declining Mughal Empire could have provided a rallying point in the north India to drive away the British. The English policy was to stave off any such attempt. The French menace was sought to be eliminated through the establishment of a comprehensive system of alliances and political relations with native states.

The Treaty of Amiens in 1802, established peace temporarily and there was an uneasy calm. Baji Rao's acceptance of British protection caused anger and dismay to Scindhia. It was realized by Scindhia that he had to face the British power after the Treaty of Bassein which provided for British arbitration between the Peshwa and the other Indian powers. As Scindhia had, Perron trained French battalions and was capable of offering a serious opposition to the East India Company in North India, Lord Wellesley decided to annihilate the French influence at Scindhia's court. The objects of Wellesley were the destruction of Perron's influence and establishment of British control over the Delhi-Agra region. He desired

a well knit north India under the British paramountcy eliminating the French threat forever.

Wellesley's spectacular success was achieved as much by clever diplomacy, as by the sheer weight of arms. The desertion of Scindhia's French Commander Perron was largely due to the diplomatic manoeuvres of the British. The British victory over the Scindhia proved that the replacement of the traditional Maratha system of war by the alien French system could not bring victory. By neglecting the cavalry and relying upon the ill disciplined and ill-equipped infantry which was led by undependable French officers, for Scindhia the disaster was inevitable. The conduct of Perron gave a rude jolt to the French military prestige in India. At last Scindhia had to accept the Subsidiary Alliance. By breaking the power of Scindhia and by eliminating the French menace along the banks of Jumna, Lord Wellesley converted the British Empire in India into the British Empire of India.

In Europe the French was had broken out into fresh fury after the failure of Treaty of Amiens. At this juncture the India House did not want more wars in India as that would have involved it too much away from its shores.

Napoleon was marching from victory to victory on the Continent. He also forged an alliance with the Czar known as Treaty of Tilsit, aimed at sending out a Franco-Russian expedition to India via land route. This alarmed Lord Minto,

the Governor-General in India. He entered into treaties with the Punjab and Sindh to counteract Napoleonic project of a Franco-Russian expedition to India through these two border states.

But by 1809 Napoleon deeply got bogged down in the Peninsular War. He had to abandon his scheme to drive away the British from India. He met a disaster in Russia in 1812. These developments facilitated the complete expulsion of the French threat from India forever.

At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the French recognized for the first time, British sovereignty over the British possession in India, and also agreed not to maintain troops and erect any fortresses in India. The final collapse of the French interest in India greatly facilitated the ultimate conquest of India.

A study of this kind is hampered by the non-availability of French records of the period under study in India. They have been transferred to France from the Pondicherry Archives. Under these circumstances, I have quoted the sources from the works of S.P. Sen.



The Revolutionary Disturbances at Chandernagore

Chandernagore<sup>1</sup> was set up in 1690 but it was in decay, as a result of French defeat at the hands of English in 1760. Its commercial activities were marked by indolence, lacking initiative to safeguard and promote French trade and commerce.

Chandernagore had lost its political significance as well as commercial prosperity. In spite of this, Chandernagore was the hub of economic activities for the French establishments in India. The major portion of revenue came from the sale of salt and opium in Bengal whereas the territorial revenue contributed only a small part of the total revenue.<sup>2</sup>

The opium trade in Chandernagore settlement was privately owned but Montigny, the Commandant brought it under state control. This step registered a profit of 12 to 15 hundred thousand livres annually. The salt was another major commodity for trade. It was purchased on the basis of permits by the English in Calcutta at a fixed price of Rupees 120 for 100 mounds. These permits brought to Chandernagore 7½% deduction for meeting establishment charges and for imparting relief to the poor in the various settlements.

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1. About the origin of Chandernagore, see S.P. Sen's article "Farmans and Parawans for the Establishment of the French in Bengal", Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records, 1946.
  2. ms. 2542 (P.A.)

For Chandernagore, salt trade was very significant Labernadie described it in these words:

"the sale of permits of salt was a resource for the state, the sale of salt brought an income to private persons and in addition the percentage deducted from the total sale proceeds, augmented a fund for the relief of the poor".<sup>1</sup>

We can see how salt brought considerable income to Chandernagore. It developed into centre whose commercial importance was more than political.

Montigny's reforms of establishing state monopoly over the opium trade and introducing permits for salt, proved advantageous to Chandernagore and its prosperity increased a great deal. Montigny also curtailed several undesirable expenditures which naturally made him unpopular and his schemes started drawing flaks from all quarters. Montigny wrote a note on the improvements in administration, tittled as "The present State of the French Settlements in Bengal" dated May 29, 1789.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless Montigny was criticised by his detractors as a dictator: "Whose long residence at the court of Marathas, had accustomed him to all the manoeuvres of an abject policy and who believed that he could employ the same

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1. Labernadie, La Revolution et les Etablissements Francais dans l' Inde 1929 p.209.

2. ms. 2690 (P.A.)

methods for the governance of Chandernagore".<sup>1</sup>

Montigny had been more successful at Poona than at Chandernagore. He took strict measures, which were disliked by those who had profited at the cost of the settlement.

Montigny assumed the powers of the President of the tribunal and crushed the power of ordonnateur. He sacked the three Assessors of the Tribunal, de Verinnes, Auvernaïs and Tinglet de Neuville and inducted his own men in their place.<sup>2</sup>

Having assured of supremacy over the Tribunal, Montigny thereafter dealt with Richemont, the Procureur, and Mercier the Registrar of the court. Both of them were charged with grave monetary irregularities and anomalies. Montigny received orders from Conway, the Governor-General, to proceed against these people and get rid of them.

However Mercier, managed to decamp from Chandernagore with Public funds under his charge. Richemont was charged for duplicity in Mercier's escape. He was found guilty and suspended from his post.

De Bretel, the henchman of Montigny was inducted to discharge the duties till the arrival of a permanent incumbent.

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1. Griefs des Citoyens, drawn up by the Revolutionary elements at Chandernagore on June 19, 1790, ms. 2712, (P.A.)
  2. Ibid.

De Verinnes resigned on being charged for grave anomalies.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that Montigny's measures did show improvements, yet he became unpopular. He had packed the administration with his own partisans and lost the confidence of population of Chandernagore.

The administrative relationship between Chandernagore and Pondicherry was ambiguous. This was a cause of great confusion. In fact Chandernagore was legally under the control of Pondicherry but in the absence of a powerful authority there, the Commandant of Chandernagore had to rely on the Governor-General in the Isle of France.

Montigny was the choice of Conway, the Governor-General, hence he was disliked by the Pondicherry authorities for according less respect to them by the Chandernagore administration.

The news of French Revolution in France was transmitted to the French settlements by Biennerue in 1790. The revolutionary slogans of the French Revolution—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity inspired the people of Chandernagore considerably. The people imitated their Parisian brothers and set up a General Assembly of Citizens and a national Committee to check the powers of Governor. The General Assembly described Montigny as an autocrat who had trampled

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1. Ibid.

upon the rights and freedom of the citizens of Chandernagore.<sup>1</sup>

Richemont, the procureur, got satisfied with the outcome at Pondicherry and returned to Chandernagore, on April 28, 1790. But the isle of France sent Villau des Rabines, as the new Procureur appointed by Conway.

The myopic attitude of Montigny aided by the arrival of Richemont, generated a flare up among the people of Chandernagore.<sup>2</sup> Richemont discovered that the arrival of Vallau des Rabines threatened his claim on the office of procureur. Richemont was fully supported by the Consul Superiur in this regard.

Des Rabines was the real incumbent appointed by the Governor-General. Richemont having seen his position weakened, tried to achieve his success by way of staging popular upheaval.<sup>3</sup>

On April 30, he convened a meeting of his supporters calling it the General Assembly of Citizens. The summit was attended by 43 citizens. The agenda was an amalgamation of Richemont's personal complaints and public interests of the citizens in general. They had prepared a petition addressed to Conseil Provincial urging him to declare the appointment of a new Procureur, as null and void. In the meanwhile,

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1. ms. 2716 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2722 (P.A.)

3. ms. 2735 (P.A.)

preparations were made for a popular upheaval to put pressure on the authorities.<sup>1</sup> Fresh appeals were made to citizens to assemble on May 3, to chalk out a programme for the welfare and tranquility of the colony.<sup>2</sup>

The General Assembly deliberated on the issue on 3rd May and resolved to pressurise the Conseil Provincial which was scheduled to assemble the same day. De Verinnes was elected as President and Tingley as Secretary. Both of them had been victims of Montigny's despotic attitude. Frimont, and other armed personnel took the swearing. Richemont had acquired a powerful say in the matters of the Assembly. The deliberations started with the swearing in ceremony for "the Nation, the Law and the king". Richemont got up to speak about the revolution at Pondicherry and easily aroused the Passions of the citizens of Chandernagore by assuring, that they would obtain from the national Assembly in Paris, the entire gain coming from the sale of opium and saltpetre for them without sharing it with the citizens of other French settlements.<sup>3</sup>

The Conseil Provincial rejected the petition adopted on 30th April. This enraged the Assembly which in turn pronounced the Conseil dissolved and elected a new one in its place, which rehabilitated Richemont on his old post of

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1. ms. 2738 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2739 (P.A.)

3. ms. 2742 (P.A.)

the Procureur. The citizens there upon went on a demonstration, seized the Council House and installed a new Tribunal.

Now the Assembly decided to deal with Montigny who was a despot in the eyes of the citizens of Chandernagore. Fresh summons were issued to him to appear before the Assembly and take an oath of fidelity to the Nation and give recognition to the new order. Montigny adopted delaying tactics in order to avoid the Assembly.

He yielded in the end before the Assembly and accepted its four demands: First to give recognition to the validity of the Assembly, second, to give sanction to all its actions, third, to place the troops under its charge and lastly to treat the foreign powers in accordance with its wishes.

Montigny vacillated and wanted to buy some time by pretending to study the demands. The Assembly refused to give him any time. He hesitatingly accepted all the demands and took the oath of loyalty to the Nation. He was hailed as a patriotic leader. The Assembly Hall echoed with the slogans of "Long live the Nation, long live Montigny."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Montigny was very tactful and prudent like de Fresne, the Governor of Pondicherry. He could have maintained a balance between himself and the

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1. Proceedings of the meetings of the General Assembly of Citizens from April 30 to May 14, 1790, ms. 2698 (P.A.)

Assembly, but he had no intention of keeping his words.

The Assembly met on 9th May and directed him to inform the foreign powers about the changes in the administrative set up of Chandernagore. He vacillated, thereupon 11th May, the Committee pressed Montigny to recognize the validity of the Assembly and its Committee. He declined to do so. The open perfidy on the part of Montigny brought about the convening of the Assembly on 14th May.<sup>1</sup> In the meanwhile Montigny secretly left Chandernagore for Chinsurah. The Assembly deliberated on his conduct on 14th May. When informed of his escape, the Assembly dismissed Montigny.

Frimont, the Commander of the troops, viewed that it was the charge of the army to maintain order in Chandernagore yet he was careful and cautious not to accept any functions from the hands of the Assembly. The Committee of Assembly took over the functions of the Commandant till the arrival of a successor.<sup>2</sup>

The Revolution seemed victorious but soon there was a trouble over its course. Several excesses were committed against the supporters of Montigny. But some people felt that Richemont and his partisans were out to befool them.

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1. Extract from the Deliberations of the National Committee of Citizens May 9, 1790, ms. 2697 (P.A.)
  2. Proceedings of the meetings of the General Assembly of citizens, ms. 2698 (P.A.)



The end of May saw the flight of these people to other settlements to escape from the new tyranny. De Verinnes, the President of the Committee and a member Deonna after having laid down their offices, had shifted to Serampore. Montigny also reached Serampore from Chinsurah.

There was consternation at Chandernagore that the French emigres under the guidance of Montigny were hatching a conspiracy to dismantle the new regime in the French settlement by force.<sup>1</sup> There was a substantial truth in the allegation. Montigny was working in that direction and had been assured help in this regard by the British in Calcutta. Lord Cornwallis, the Governor-General had stated clearly that British Government in India was with Montigny and did not recognise any one else, as far as the French were concerned in India. In the eyes of Cornwallis, Montigny was the sole representative of the French nation in Bengal.<sup>2</sup>

The Committee at Chandernagore took certain concrete measures to ward off an attack by Montigny and his cohorts. They raised a protective force of armed volunteers to guard against impending attack. The citizens of Chandernagore were armed to protect themselves.

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1. Letter from the Citizens' Committee to Frimont, June 23, 1790, ms. 2699 (P.A.)
  2. Labernadie, op.cit. pp. 224-25

The situation took a sharp turn when Frimont along with his troops on 24th June, shifted to Goretty, the residential establishment of the Commandant. He took this drastic action over the arming of all the citizens without his permission. He had nothing to do with the plans of Montigny. Nor did he comply with the order of the Committee ordering him to report at Chandernagore.<sup>1</sup>

During his stay at Serampore, Montigny had communicated with de Fresne, the Governor of Pondicherry and told him about the incidents at Chandernagore and blamed the Pondicherry Government for the encouragement given to Richemont.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand the Assembly and the Committee at Chandernagore has also apprised the Pondicherry Government about the developments and sought an assurance from them. They also sought protection for their actions and demanded a new commandant.<sup>3</sup>

Under these circumstances it was clear that peace and order would be established only when Montigny was deprived of the office, held by him. The Citizens of Chandernagore were determined to keep Montigny at bay and would not allow him to come back and continue his dictatorial methods.<sup>4</sup>

The determination and strength of their ideas was

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1. ms. 2699 (P.A.)

2. Letters dated May 27 & August 24, 1790, ms. 2702, 2738.

3. Letters dated May 29, June 19, June 29, July 1, July 7, September 6, 1790, ms. 2703, 2712, 2723, 2727, 2731, 2739, (P.A.)

4. ms. 2731 (P.A.)

reflected in their letter addressed to the Committee of citizens at Pondicherry on 29th May. It resolved: "Whatever may happen we would rather perish than return to the chains of despotism. France will avenge our death".<sup>1</sup>

It appears that the ominous features of the revolution at Chandernagore could have been obliterated if Montigny had been divested of his office by the Pondicherry Government soon after his flight from Chandernagore. But Conway, the Government General turned his back on the grievances of the citizens of Chandernagore, because Montigny was his protege. It was not till July that Conway decided to abandon his favourite under pressure.<sup>2</sup>

Montigny tried his luck by installing himself on 30th July at Goretty which was nearer to Chandernagore. He decided to use it as a base and teach his rivals, at Chandernagore a lesson. He was emboldened after the withdrawal of Frimont to Goretty. He had recruited armed constabulary and some cannons from the East India Company.<sup>3</sup>

But Frimont did not join Montigny and remained aloof from his project to dismantle the regime at Chandernagore. In order to put more pressure, Montigny decided to give a rude jolt to the new administration at Chandernagore

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1. ms. 2703 (P.A.)
  2. ms. 2736 (P.A.)
  3. ms. 2737 (P.A.)

economically. The trade and commerce in salt was on direct payment between the Calcutta Government, and the Commandant of Chandernagore. He was bent upon disrupting the trade hoping thus to shatter the economy of Chandernagore atleast temporarily.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee at Chandernagore was in commotion on having learnt about the designs of Montigny. But soon the scenario changed dramatically. Conway sacked Montigny under pressure. The news of the dismissal of Montigny delighted the citizens at Chandernagore. The town witnessed an unprecedented rejoicing and celebrations.<sup>2</sup>

As Montigny was well entrenched at Goretty, soon on 2nd September the armed citizens surrounded the fortification of Montigny. Although Montigny had a big army at his command and was determined to act against the present set up at Chandernagore. But the news of his dismissal had completely shattered him and he bowed down before the citizens' militia without offering any resistance. On 3rd September he was taken to Chandernagore along with his collaborators and imprisoned.

The quick developments at Chandernagore, however, did not impress Lord Cornwallis who had all along been sympathetic

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1. ms. 2739 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2740 (P.A.)

to Montigny. Lord Cornwallis, therefore, wanted to rescue Montigny and his supporters from the clutches of Assembly at Chandernagore. He decided to put more pressure on Chandernagore.

Goretty was segregated from Chandernagore by a very small strip over which the English had control. The East India Company charged the Assembly with violating the British territorial rights by taking army across the strip without its permission. Cornwallis asked the Chandernagore administration to release all the detainees arrested at Goretty. He surrounded the French colony with 2000 troops. The Committee remained undeterred and threatened to eliminate all the prisoners if the English intervened in their affairs. The English troops quickly withdrew in the face of this threat.<sup>1</sup>

Montigny was subjected to interrogations by the Assembly on several charges. He however declined to answer them as he refused to recognise the validity of the Committee.<sup>2</sup> The Assembly, thereupon was of the view that Montigny and his supporters should be despatched to France for trial by National Assembly. The Committee took this decision in the face of an apprehension that the English might intervene to obtain the release of Montigny and his supporters if

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1. Lebarnadie, op.cit. pp. 227-230

2. ms. 2765 (P.A.)

their trial was held at Chandernagore.

On 1st October Montigny and his collaboratore were sent aboard a boat renamed the 'Patriote' to the mouth of Hoogoly where a bigger ship had anchored to carry them to the isle of France.<sup>1</sup> Moreover on 5th October the British seized the Patriote and demanded the handing over of Montigny and his supporters. The French vessel was forced to surrender the captives who were taken to Calcutta.

The British by impounding the boat demanded the Chandernagore Assembly to satisfy that the Treaty of Versailles in moving the troops to Goreetty without their consent, was violated.

The Chandernagore Assembly protested against the unauthorised action on the part of the British and demanded clarification on Lord Cornwallis's unwarranted interference in releasing Montigny and his protagonists.<sup>2</sup> No reply was sent by the East India Company authorities of Calcutta.<sup>3</sup>

Mottet took over as the successor of Montigny at Chandernagore. However, he met the same fate and was forced

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1. ms. 2777 (P.A.)

2. For a detailed account of the dispute with the Calcutta Government after the capture of Goreetty leading to the attack on the Chandernagore, see ms. 2778 (P.A.)

3. Complaints against the conduct of the British Government in India having been made by the inhabitants of Chandernagore and transmitted to Europe for the consideration of the French National Assembly, see ms. 2779 (P.A.)

to take asylum at Calcutta. On 10th February, 1791. Montigny left Calcutta for France. He bade adieu to his well wishers and assured them that he would ask for fair play in Paris.<sup>1</sup>

At Chandernagore Montigny had been very unpopular and the Pondicherry Government failed to replace him by a more shrewd person without the consent of the Governor-General. Montigny was called back and de Fresne the Governor of Pondicherry was left free to put things in order at Chandernagore. He decided to send a competent and self assured person to cool down the temper and pacify Chandernagore.

The situation improved with the appointment of Cossigny as Governor-General in August, 1790.<sup>2</sup> The Governor-General designate, adopted a considerate posture.<sup>3</sup>

De Canaple was appointed to succeed Montigny at Chandernagore. Cossigny stated that he would depend upon the advice of the Governor of Pondicherry, being the man on the spot.<sup>4</sup> Thus de Fresne decided to deal with the

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1. Labernadie-op.cit.pp. 249-250  
An anonymous memoire, La Revolution de Chandernagore on relation des troubles qui ont lieu dans cette colonie eh 1790 gives a complete and impartial narration of the course of events at Chandernagore during the early part of the Revolution there, ms. 2783 (P.A.)
  2. mss. 1279
  3. mss. 1281
  4. mss. 1296.

Chandernagore unrest tactfully. He knew very well that the arrival of a new incumbent at Chandernagore would take some time. At the same time it was imperative to assuage the feelings of the residents of Chandernagore.

As an interim arrangement, therefore, de Fresne decided to send Mottet who had the experience of Chandernagore administration. He was instructed to inform the Chandernagore Committee about his temporary assignment, till the arrival of de Canaple.

He was to act as a conciliator than an administrator and his main aim was to reinvigorate and restrengthen the economy which was in shambles since the Revolutionary Committee came into power. The trade and Commerce had come to a grinding halt at Chandernagore. The commercial activities had reached to an all time low.<sup>1</sup> The vessels had not visited Chandernagore in greater numbers as before and after the outbreak of revolution. In the face of troubled conditions French Traders had fled and taken shelter at places like Chinsurah, Serampore and Calcutta. The Revolutionary Committee was both extravagant and reckless in spending the scarce resources of the company. Morey for this reckless spending was secured by draining the

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1. mss. 1295



Government treasury and utilizing unauthorisedly the funds and goods of the Company.<sup>1</sup> The Bengali population of Chandernagore was subject to extortions and exactions under the euphemistic name of "forced loan".

Mottet reached Chandernagore on 5th November, 1790. He was accorded reception which was by no means friendly. On the contrary he was interrogated for several days and was treated "almost like a criminal", on his arrival at Chandernagore. The Committee infact suspected and distrusted him. The Committee at last decided to recognise him as the head of the executive but not without curtailing his powers. The Committee retained control over finance, policy and justice.

This arrangement was to last till the drawing up of a new constitution for Chandernagore. Mottet was forbidden to have any contact with the Chiefs of the Danish and Dutch settlements in Bengal, because they had given help to Montigny. He was also ordered to demand reparation from them for the outrage, committed on the French Vessels of Chandernagore. Mottet played a second fiddle to the Committee and was bound to execute and implement the laws, promulgated by the Committee.<sup>2</sup> He was under instructions not to take any independent decision. As a matter of grace he was allowed only to communicate with the Governor of Pondicherry.

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1. Protest of the Company's agents at Chandernagore, ms. 2781 (P.A.)

2. About Mottet's mission in Chandernagore, see ms. 1301(P.A.)

Mottet had to put up with the conditions, imposed by the Committee. He could not decide to even lay down his office for fear of persecution by the Committee. He was in search of an opportunity and a pretext to get out of Chandernagore. On the pretext of settling the question of opium and salt with the East India Company, Mottet left Chandernagore early in December and stayed on in Calcutta from where he despatched a lengthy report to de Fresne.<sup>1</sup>

In January 1791, the differences erupted among the members of the Revolutionary Committee at Chandernagore. The Committee was now strife torn. People, opposing dictatorial practices of Richemont were charged with scheming to overthrow the present regime. They were thrown into the prison.<sup>2</sup> Many of the accused succeeded in escaping from the Chandernagore prison.

Mottet at Calcutta decided that the time was ripe for him to act and employ stern measures to end lawlessness and disorder at Chandernagore. He made a request to Lord Cornwallis to allow him to take French troops through the British territory. He also appealed to the Committee at Chandernagore to allow him to act but his request was turned down.<sup>3</sup>

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1. About Mottet's mission in Bengal, see ms. 1304 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2784, 2786, 2791 (P.A.)

3. ms. 2791 (P.A.)

In the meanwhile the newly appointed Commandant, de Canaple reached Calcutta on 12th February. Mottet heaved a sigh of relief on being discharged of responsibilities. He laid down his office and handed over the charge to de Canaple. He had failed in the task of pacifying Chandernagore and returned to Pondicherry.

De Canaple had been a Commandant at Mahe from November 1787 to April 1790 and he remained at the top of the affairs before the eruption of the revolutionary troubles there. He returned to the isle of France with the intention of returning to France. But Conway appointed him as the Commandant of Chandernagore in July, 1790.

De Canaple was under instructions from Conway and Cossigny to be mild and conciliatory in dealing with the Committee. He left for Chandernagore at the start of September, 1790. On reaching Chandernagore, de Canaple requested, de Fresne to authorise him to run the Chandernagore administration. Accordingly de Fresne sent him another set of instructions and also requested the Chandernagore Committee to accept de Canaple with a good grace.<sup>1</sup>

In his instructions de Fresne made provision for the contingency of the new Commandant not being acceptable to the Chandernagore Committee. In that case he was to take up his

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1. ms. 1330, 1331, 2782 (P.A.)

residence in Calcutta and get himself recognised by Lord Cornwallis and the Chiefs of the other foreign settlements as the accredited representative of France in Bengal and to occupy himself with the sale of opium and salt.

De Canaple arrived in Calcutta on 12th February, 1791. He despatched a letter to the Chandernagore Committee along with the instructions of de Fresne. He did not rush to Chandernagore straight from Calcutta. He sought an assurance from the Committee to cooperate with him.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee in reply expressed dismay over the attitude of de Canaple. He was afraid to come to Chandernagore although he expressed his loyalty to the revolution.<sup>2</sup>

The Committee also felt angry that de Canaple should have got instructions from the Governor of Pondicherry whose authority the citizens of Chandernagore no longer recognised.<sup>3</sup>

De Canaple there upon decided to remain stationed at Calcutta and look after the sale of opium and salt. At the end of June he was plagued by a fatal disease to which he succumbed on 5th August 1791.<sup>4</sup>

After his sad demise, the British Government closed down the office of the French administration in Calcutta till the advent of a new Commandant.<sup>5</sup> While de Canaple was

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1. ms. 2787 (P.A.)

2. Ibid

3. ms. 2788 (P.A.)

4. ms. 2803 (P.A.)

5. ms. 2800 (P.A.)

in the death bed, the Chandernagore Committee clandestinely despatched a delegation comprising Longchamp and Ricard to the Assembly of the isle of France to place before it the complaints against the Commandant. At the same time it made a fiery appeal to the Pondicherry garrison to revolt against the tyranny of de Fresne and the reactionary Assembly of that place<sup>1</sup>.

The hostile address only widened the gulf between Pondicherry and isle of France, both adopting different policies to pacify troubles at Chandernagore<sup>2</sup>.

The Assembly of the isle of France right from the inception of the eruption at Chandernagore had stood by the anti-Montigny revolutionary faction.<sup>3</sup> The delegation of Longchamp and Ricard made tremendous impact on the Assembly. It brought pressure on Cossigny to interfere in the affairs of Chandernagore. In July he decided to recall de Camille and to send two Conciliation Commissioners Gautier and Yuon<sup>4</sup> to Bengal<sup>5</sup>.

The information of this drastic change reached Pondicherry at the start of August. De Fresne considered it as a personal challenge to him<sup>6</sup>. On 7th August the Pondicherry Assembly

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1. ms. 2801 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2802 (P.A.)

3. ms. 2802 (P.A.)

4. In 1789 he wrote his notes Sur le Bengale, a lengthy document of more than 100 pages, mss. 1142 (P.A.) Yuon's notes have been Summarised by M. Bardet in an article entitled "Chandernagore in 1789" published in the Revue Historique de l'Inde Francaise, Vol IV, pt II, 1952 (P.A.)

5. ms. 1443 (P.A.)

6. ms. 1445 (P.A.)

passed a resolution protesting against the interference of the Isle of France in the affairs of Chandernagore by sending a Conciliation Commission.

The Pondicherry Assembly was encouraged by the recognition it got from the National Assembly in France. Its deputies were accepted as the accredited representatives of French India. It claimed that the Pondicherry Assembly was in no way subject to the Government of the isle of France and that it alone had full control over the Indian settlement.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, at the request of the Assembly, de Fresne decided to send its President, Fumeron to Bengal not as Commandant for he had no authority to make such an appointment but simply as an agent to look after the interests of the Nation.<sup>2</sup>

Fumeron was to try to bring the Chandernagore Committee to reason and to induce the citizens to elect representatives to the new Colonial Assembly at Pondicherry, failing which he was to convoke a meeting of the emigres to elect representatives for Chandernagore.<sup>3</sup>

The Conciliation Commissioners from the Isle of France reached Chandernagore on 10th September and on 12th September

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1. Deliberations of the colonial Assembly, August 7, 1791, ms. 1457 (P.A.)
  2. ms. 1458 (P.A.)
  3. ms. 1462 (P.A.)

Fumeron had the same mission, to restore order at Chandernagore but their *modus operandi* was so entirely different that no agreement was possible.<sup>1</sup>

Gautier and Yvon at Chandernagore and Fumeron in Calcutta soon after their arrival had a voluminous correspondence, each side trying to convince the other of the rationality of its view point.<sup>2</sup>

The Conciliation Commissioners were of the view that only the citizens of Chandernagore should determine their destiny. They should set up a system of their liking and no outside pressure should be brought on them against their will.<sup>3</sup> The Conciliation Commissioners were also protagonist of keeping all the French settlements in India under the control of the Isle of France. They were of the opinion that the Pondicherry Government had no *locus standi* in the affairs of Chandernagore.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the sale of opium, the two Commissioners favoured Chandernagore since it was an article of Bengal. According to them Chandernagore alone had the right to be benefited from the sale of opium, but as a matter of compromise it could set aside a part of the sale for other French settlements in India.<sup>5</sup>

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1. ms. 1463 (P.A.)
  2. ms. 2815 (P.A.)
  3. ms. 2817 (P.A.)
  4. ms. 2819 (P.A.)
  5. ms. 2820 (P.A.)

Fumeron on the other hand, vehemently refuted the charge that Pondicherry had no control over Chandernagore. He was also of the view that the Government of the Isle of France had no right to intervene in the affairs of Chandernagore.<sup>1</sup> Secondly he declared that by according autonomy to Chandernagore under the present circumstances would be tantamount to sustaining a dictatorial regime which had already driven out the liberty loving citizens, from the colony. Thirdly, on the question of opium he based his argument on a current order of the minister, earmarking the revenue from the sale of that article to the general revenues of the French Colonies in India, to be disbursed by the Pondicherry Government.

Finally the controversy was put to an end by the decision of the Calcutta Government, recognising Fumeron as the official French representative in Bengal and handing over to him the quantity of opium fixed by the Anglo-French Convention of 1787 on 5th October.<sup>2</sup>

It was a big triumph for Fumeron and the Pondicherry Government. Chandernagore was deprived of the revenue from the sale of opium. The autonomy of Chandernagore as a result of this arrangement, was in jeopardy.

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1. Ibid

2. Calcutta Council to Fumeron, October 5, 1791, mss. 2821 (P.A.)



The British recognition accorded to Fumeron, did not worry either the Revolutionary Committee at Chandernagore or the Conciliation Commissioners, at all. A general assembly of the citizens was held for the purpose on 17th October. The emigres did not participate. Instead they convened another assembly in Calcutta a few days later.<sup>1</sup>

The Revolutionary Committee at Chandernagore and the Conciliation Commissioners were determined to draft a new constitution for the settlement. On 6th November the General Assembly of Chandernagore drafted a new constitution and implemented it with immediate effect.<sup>2</sup>

The constitution adopted by Chandernagore Assembly declared itself completely free from the control of Pondicherry. There was to be a representative of the King, but the real powers were vested in the General Assembly; comprising all the active citizens of 25 years of age, or over and the residents of the settlement. They were to elect an Assemblée Administrative which was to meet once in three months. A smaller body called the Directorate was to be in charge of the administration during the recess of the meetings of the Assemblée Administrative.<sup>3</sup>

The General Assembly was to meet once in a year. It also

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1. ms. 2831, 2833, 2835, 2837 (P.A.)

2. Constitution Provisoire de la colonie de Chandernagore, ms. 2842 (P.A.)  
Also consult Labernadie, op.cit. pp. 279-90

3. ms. 2843 (P.A.)

elected two judicial tribunals, one for the Europeans and the other for Indians. On the second tribunal also, there was to be a Frenchman as judge but he was to be assisted by the Indian Assessors who were to be elected by the Indian inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the French Revolution the French colonialists could not shake off their prejudices and that was the only crumb of 'equality' and 'fraternity' offered to Indians.<sup>2</sup>

After the introduction of the new constitution Gautier returned to the Isle of France. Yvon remained Commandant at Chandernagore. Soon Richemont also returned to the same place to advocate the cause of the citizens of Chandernagore against, the tyrannical interference of the Pondicherry Government. His advocacy was a grand success and he returned to Bengal in June 1792.

In the meantime Cossigny despatched an official order to de Fresne to recall Fumeron at once and desist from interfering in the matters of Chandernagore till the arrival of Civil Commissioners from France,<sup>3</sup> who were to take over shortly.

It was insulting for de Fresne but he had nevertheless to comply with the orders of the French Governor-General.

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1. ms. 2845 (P.A.)

2. ms. 2845 (P.A.)

3. ms. 1886 (P.A.)

Fumeron could not leave Bengal because of the sad demise of Yvon. In the meantime Cossigny was replaced by Malartic as Governor-General. Therefore, the departure of Fumeron was delayed by a few months. On the other hand the incumbency of Malartic gave a fresh lease of life to the Pondicherry Government to interfere in the affairs of Chandernagore. But this was not to be so because Malartic wrote to de Fresne advising to send back Fumeron and to leave the affairs of Chandernagore in the same state in which they had remained during the time of Cossigny.<sup>1</sup> To humiliate de Fresne further, Malartic appointed Gautier as Commandant at Chandernagore. Gautier could not return to Bengal. He reached Pondicherry with Lescallier one of the Civil Commissioners, and remained stranded there till the seizure of the colony by the East India Company.<sup>2</sup>

Fumeron however left Calcutta in October 1792. He again took over at Pondicherry as President of the colonial Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

For half a year the lawlessness remained unabated at Chandernagore, and the emigres in Calcutta remained poverty ridden and destitute. Finally all the ill-will and enmities among the French in Bengal were set at rest by the

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1. ms. 1888 (P.A.)

2. ms. 1890 (P.A.)

3. ms. 1893 (P.A.)

incarceration of all the emigres in Calcutta, and capture of Chandernagore by the East India Company on 11th June, 1793 following the advent of the news of war in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

We have no records to show what resistance was offered by the citizens of Chandernagore perhaps, none at all.

The news of the revolution in French stirred the French colonies in India; Chandernagore, in particular adopted a new constitution. In spite of this, Equality and Fraternity was denied to Indians. Moreover, the differences between the officials of Isle of France, Pondicherry and Chandernagore were more of personality clashes rather than any change in their policies and attitude.

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1. Secret Committee to the Governor-General, June 11, F.D., 1793 (NAI).

## Chapter II

### The French Menace and East India Company (1789-1803)

As a consequence of the loss of American Colonies, Lord Cornwallis was instructed to adopt a pacific and defensive policy as laid down in the Act of 1784. But the French Revolution had burst forth with unexampled fury and all Europe was heaving with Commotion.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, at that time international expediency rather than any set principles guided his deliberations and policies. Cornwallis apprehended an anti-British alliance in India under the aegis of French in the event of an Anglo-French conflict in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

He thundered that any intervention of the French with a view to disturb the peace of India or sow discord among the princes and inhabitants, would not be tolerated.

Lord Cornwallis was the first Governor-General in India to realize that the suppression of the French political activities in India should be made the main principle of British policy.<sup>3</sup> He was not disposed to concede any political rights or privileges to the French whom he considered to be residing in India for the purpose of trade only.

Lord Cornwallis kept a tight control over the northern

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1. Beveridge, H., A Comprehensive History of India Vol II, 1871, p. 600.
  2. Chatham Papers, Vol 176, Scott to Pitt, January 22, 1790 quoted in Philips C.H., East India Company, 1961, p.67.
  3. Ross, Charles, Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis, Vol II, 1859, pp.20-22.

states so that he could deal with the "Tipu menace".<sup>1</sup> Consequently, he defeated Tipu and forced him to sign a humiliating Treaty of Seringapatam by which his power was crippled.<sup>2</sup> This was the greatest political achievement of of Lord Cornwallis who enhanced British position, prestige and resources in India.

The disturbances in Europe which ensued upon the French Revolution, threatened to affect the British interests in India.<sup>3</sup> But the Revolutionary war brought no troubles to the English on Indian soil. By August 1793, Cornwallis had the satisfaction of congratulating the Court of Directors on the reduction of all the French settlements and factories at Chandernagore in north India.<sup>4</sup> His services were applauded and the House of Commons recommended in 1793 that his statue should be placed in the court room at the India House.<sup>5</sup>

Sir John Shore, the successor of Lord Cornwallis was also a non-interventionist. The period following the outbreak of the Revolutionary war in Europe, was one of uneasy peace in India.<sup>6</sup> The war in Europe expanded and involved

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1. On September 7, 1791, Dundas told Grenville, "We should have Seringapattam before Parliament meets" Home Misc. 362 F 102 September 7, 1791 quoted in Philips op.cit., p. 68
  2. Political letter to Court of Directors, January 17, 1794 (NAI)
  3. Political letter to Court of Directors, August 1, 1793 (NAI)
  4. Political letters to Court of Directors, August 13, 1793 (NAI)
  5. Beveridge, op.cit. p.640
  6. Political letter to Court of Directors, May 15, 1794 (NAI)

the East also, thereby brought the unsettled question of Indian supremacy once more to the forefront.

The political situation in north India witnessed the rise of Scindhia in the 1770's. Mahadaji Scindhia brought back the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam to Delhi from Allahabad. This enhanced the prestige of Scindhia.<sup>1</sup> The modernisation of Scindhia's army under the supervision of French further alarmed the East India Company. The rise of Scindhia power was viewed by the British as a replacement to the depleted authority of the Mughal Empire filling the political vacuum in India.<sup>2</sup>

The first European adventurer to be employed by Scindhia, was de Boigne who first entered the service of Scindhia in 1784. He was entrusted with the task of raising two infantry battalions of 850 men each equipped and trained on European model. He was given a salary of rupees one thousand a month. His force demonstrated the prowess by establishing Scindhia's authority in north India. De Boigne was asked to raise three brigades of 18,000 regular infantry, 600 irregulars, 2000 irregular horses, 600 Afghan cavalry and 2000 guns in 1790.

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1. Political letter to Court of Directors, November 21, 1791 (NAI).

2. Smith, V., The Oxford History of India, 1919, p. 359

For the maintenance of this army, a vast area in the Doab consisting of 52 districts and yielding an annual revenue of 22 lakhs of rupees was assigned to de Boigne who acted as an independent potentate.<sup>1</sup> The fortress of Agra was given to him to serve as his ammunition centre and he kept his base at Aligarh.<sup>2</sup>

When Mahadaji Scindhia started for Poona 1793, de Boigne was left behind practically as the caretaker ruler of the Gwalior Kingdom. But the turn of Maratha politics after the sudden death of Mahadaji in 1794 made him feel uneasy about his future and at the end of 1795, he gave up the services of Scindhia with the reluctant consent of Daulat Rao Scindhia and went back to Europe, carrying his colossal riches amassed during his stay in India.

De Boigne rendered a great service to Scindhia. It was he who organised his scattered forces, trained them in European Style and imparted to them a new discipline.

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1. Sen, S.P., The French in India, 1958, p. 543.

2. The fortress at Alighur (Aligarh) was a most valuable acquisition, not merely on its own account but from the quantity of military stores which it had. French having made it their Chief depot in the Doab. This selection was certainly justified by the natural and artificial strength of the plan. This site on an elevated plain surrounded by swamps made it perfectly inaccessible in the rainy season and every thing which the skill of French engineers could devise, had been employed to add to its natural strength.



European officers and artillery men were invited by him to join the army and it was through his efforts that it attained the strength of 68 battalions, 427 guns and 40,000 horses.<sup>1</sup> The guerilla tactics of warfare were abandoned and fine modern army was built under de Boigne. It was this army which defeated the Muslims and Rajputs and the auxiliaries of Holkar in 1792 and established Scindhia's ascendancy in North India.<sup>2</sup>

But by adopting the armament and tactics of European warfare, the Marathas lost the advantage of unanimity of national, religious or tribal sentiments out of the bond of a common country or tradition. The new system required professional soldiers and foreign officers. In this manner the foreign or alien element grew rapidly until the later Maratha armies became principally a miscellaneous collection of mercenaries, enlisted from all parts of India with trained infantry and artillery commanded by adventurers of different races and countries.

Sir Philip Francis had got a clause inserted in the Charter of 1793 which aimed to pursue Schemes of the conquest and extention of dominion in India, repugnant to the wish,

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1. New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. IX, 1975, p.554.
  2. Lyall, Sir Alfred, Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India. 1907, p. 201

the honour and the policy of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Shore sought to show that he adhered to this clause. England was up against the French Revolution also. The situation, at that time prevented England to despatch a considerable reinforcement of troops to India during the continuance of Revolutionary wars in Europe. This impressed upon Sir Shore to maintain peace with all the powers in India.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the British wanted to show the world their pacific intentions hence this new clause was inserted. But they were uneasy about the French threat to India. Lord Mornington, the British member told the House of Commons in 1794; "The real cause of our present security is to be found in our own exertions. By those exertions we were able to withstand and repel the first assault of the arms and principles of France and the continuance of the same effort now forms our only barrier against the return of the same danger."<sup>3</sup>

But the non-interventionist policy of Sir John Shore imperilled the position of the British in India. His adhering to "non-intervention",<sup>4</sup> only encouraged the Scindhia to employ the French Officers who trained and led his army. Naturally

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1. Kastury, N., History of British Occupation, undated, p.78.

2. Beveridge, op.cit. p.666

3. Pearce, Memoirs and correspondence of the Most Noble Richard Marquess Wellesley, Vol I, 1834, p. 113

4. Holden Furber, Henry Dundas First Viscount Melville (1742-1811), undated, p. 134.

these French Officers fostered ill-feeling against the British in India. Sir Shore was also apprehensive of the designs of Perron who was given the Command of his army by Scindhia in north India after the retirement of de Boigne.

Under Perron the army was increased by two more brigades and at the same time the character of the force changed. Perron recruited the French personnel increasing their number and appointing them in higher ranks in preference to officials of other nationalities, many of whom left in disgust.<sup>1</sup>

The British were alarmed by the activities of Perron. It has always been a principal object of the British Government to prevent the sovereign power of the Maratha State from passing into the hands of French.<sup>2</sup>

The British were apprehensive that France with the help of Perron, would aim at establishing her authority within the Indian territory. The disturbed state of the Maratha empire<sup>3</sup> could afford an advantageous opportunity to France, for the successful prosecution of her favourite object of establishing a dominion within the Indian territory, by the introduction of a military force. A great territorial dominion extending towards, the left bank of the Indus through the Punjab and comprehending Agra, Delhi and large position

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1. Sen, op.cit., p.544

2. William, D., Marhatta Empire, 1935, p.9

3. Political letter to Court of Directors, December 31, 1796 (NAI)

of the Doab of the Jamuna and Ganges was the most vulnerable part. The personal and nominal authority of Shah Alam was in the most abject and degrading subjection.<sup>1</sup>

Daulat Rao Scindhia held the appointment of Deputy or that of a regent, exercising almost independent power of sovereignty under Shah Alam. Perron, therefore, began to call his army the Imperial Army and himself, a servant and subject of the Mughal Emperor. Presumably the French intended to utilize the name of the Mughal Emperor to further their designs in India, exercising imperial authority to re-establish their influence and power.

It was Sir Shore's misfortune to strive to maintain a policy whose bases were being steadily shorn away by unexpected events. It was his weakness not to perceive the new forces both at home and abroad, which were threatening the British interests in India. The changes and the new forces were two: firstly in Europe Napoleon was concentrating men and transports at Toulon. With the support of Talleyrand, Napoleon persuaded the Directory to switch their plans from an invasion of England to an expedition to Egypt. He condemned the invasion project as impracticable, and the threat to India offered brilliant opportunities for him. He realised that "in Paris

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1. Martin, M., Despatches Minutes and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley, Vol III, 1836, p.30

nothing is remembered for long, if I remain doing nothing for long, I am lost." This considerably alarmed the British in the India House.

Previously in February, 1796 Stephen Lushington, then Chairman of the East India Company had warned Dundas that it was possible for the French to seize Egypt and to attack India by land.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly the growing French influence in north India at the court of Scindhia was threatening.

The next large scale expansion of British rule in India occurred during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Wellesley, who assumed office in 1798 at a time when the British were locked in a life and death struggle with France. Sir John Shore believed strongly in the power of the British navy to prevent any French invasion of India. But Lord Wellesley was determined to take strong precautionary as well as offensive measures to smash all possibilities of a French revival in India.<sup>2</sup> When Wellesley assumed office as Governor-General of India, the emergence of Revolutionary France threatened the East India Company.<sup>3</sup>

He was concerned with a possible attack due to the exploits of Napoleon. There was an uneasiness in London

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1. Board to Court of Directors 1, F. 414, March 3, 1796 quoted in Philips. op.cit. p.101
  2. Martin, op.cit. Vol. I pp. 61-64
  3. Secret Committee to the Governor-General, June 18, 1798 received in Calcutta in September, 1798 (NAI).

as well as in India over the French designs towards India.<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to the Resident at Poona Lord Wellesley wrote; "But the primary object of all our vigilance and care must be the destruction of every seed of the French party already grown to so dangerous a height and still increasing in the armies and councils of the Nizam, of Scindiah and of Tipoo. The exclusion of the influence of France from the dominions of the native states is not more necessary to the preservation of our own power, than to the happiness and prosperity of this part of the world."<sup>2</sup>

But it is to his minute that we must turn for an authoritative analysis of the French threat in India as Lord Wellesley saw it. He wrote: "The systematic introduction of French Officers into the service of all the native powers is described by Mr. Wickham as the fixed policy of France, adopted with a view of establishing the most certain means of subverting the foundation of our power".<sup>3</sup>

The first reference to Perron in the voluminous writings of Lord Wellesley, occurs in a letter written from the Cape of Good Hope in February, 1798 and addressed to

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1. Napoleon wrote to the Directory "The power which is mistress of Egypt, must become in the long run, the mistress of India as well" quoted in Sen. op.cit. p. 556.

2. Martin. op.cit. Vol I p.126

3. Political letter to Court of Directors, August 12, 1798 (NAI)

(also see Martin op.cit. Vol I pp. 174-75)

the Honourable Henry Dundas, the President of the Board of Control. It merely indicates Lord Wellesley's knowledge that "Scindia employs about 20,000 Sepoys, disciplined by Europeans or Americans. The commander is named Perron, a Frenchman".<sup>1</sup>

On 4th July, 1799 in a despatch to Colonel Palmer, the Resident at Poona, Lord Wellesley wrote: "The whole system of my policy is a sufficient earnest of my anxiety to expel the French from the service of Scindiah but it might be dangerous to proceed to any steps which tend to fix Sciendiah in the interests of France".<sup>2</sup>

Under the influence of a succession of French adventurers in the service of Scindhia, the British Government had been exposed to French threat in India and even to the ambition and hostile spirit of the person who now ruled the French nation. Wellesley wrote to the Resident at Poona: "Perhaps it is not too sanguine a view of our situation to consider the annihilation of the only native ally in India as the final ruin of all her ambitious and vindictive projects against this great source of the wealth and power of Great Britain".<sup>3</sup>

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1. Compton, H., Military Adventurers of Hindustan, 1892, p. 291.

2. Martin, op.cit. Vol. I, p.69

3. Ibid p.98

The safety of the British dominion in India, either with reference to a contest with Scindhia, or to a renewal of war with France, required therefore, the reduction of Perron's power. It became the duty of the British Government to be prepared to assume the protection of its own territories and to remove with its own efforts, the proximate cause of insecurity and alarm. The existence of Perron's power was not the sole cause of the present concern for the British in India, although in the event of a renewal of war with France, it might have proved highly dangerous to the British interests.

In the meantime, the news of the sailing of a French armament under Napoleon Bonaparte was transmitted to India.<sup>1</sup> The secret despatch to the Governor-General expressed a possibility of its being destined for India. The Secret Committee was already of the opinion that the possession of Egypt by any great European power would be fatal to British interests in India. It was also apprehensive of Napoleonic outburst in relation to East particularly India.<sup>2</sup> It also did not see any reason why the French object of reaching India should not be accomplished.

The alarming menace, held out by the Revolutionary France to the British colonial interests forced Dundas to

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1. Court of Directors to the Governor-General, June 18, 1798 (NAI)

2. "Hunting the English out of all their Eastern possessions and cutting the Isthmus of Suez"

Napoleon declared in Syria in 1798

quoted in

Sir Lyall op.cit. p.206.



instruct Lord Wellesley to pursue an aggressive policy in India. From the instructions he issued and from the actions and replies of Wellesley it seems likely that they had agreed probably before Wellesley left England that the "time was ripe for an expansion of British India".<sup>1</sup> Dundas wrote to the Governor-General Wellesley that he based his policy on the principle "that the way to defeat France is to take all her colonies and to destroy her trade".<sup>2</sup> In London the Tory ministry was governing Britain by measures that could be described as arbitrary coercion.<sup>3</sup>

During this period, the manipulations of the French in India had reached the high watermark and the opposition from the Indian powers had also reached to an unprecedented level. The French were more popular in India than the British. These "Frenchmen were always favourably received by the native princes".<sup>4</sup> Lord Wellesley never lost sight of the interdependence of India and England in their involvement with France in Europe.

In combating the French menace Lord Wellesley received full support from the Pitt's ministry though he did not get the sympathies of the Court of Directors who had frowned at the extension of company's dominions and responsibilities in India. They were uneasy and concerned

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1. Board's secret Drafts, Oct. 2, 31, 1799 (NAI)

2. Ibid

3. Governor-General to the Court of Directors, January 25, 1800 quoted in Philips, C.H., Correspondence of David Scott, 1915, p.20

4. Hutton, W.H., Lord Wellesley (Rulers of India Series), 1893, p.135.

over the mounting India debt.<sup>1</sup> The policy pursued by the sagacious Governor-General did not rest solely upon the local Indian situation. He had fully realised that India had been drawn into the vortex of European politics and as such Indian politics must imperatively be dictated by the needs of the situation in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The policy of deliberate expansion with which Wellesley identified himself was to a great extent engendered by the presence of Perron at Scindhia's court. The designs of the French adventurers in the service of native states were becoming clear during the time of Lord Wellesley. The dominant conception in Indian statesmanship had hitherto been the preservation of balance of power between Mysore, Hyderabad in South and the Scindhia in North. It depended largely on the acquiescence of the three Indian powers which the British thought, could not be continuously depended upon.

In the changed circumstances, the external threat had also to be reckoned with. Evidently, should France succeed in achieving a renewed footing on Indian soil as the ally of Scindhia or of Holkar, the British would certainly have to fight for life.<sup>3</sup> This was more imperative because the native states had French Officers and sepoy

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1. D. Scott to Wellesley, August 9, 1801, quoted in Philips, op.cit., p.334.
  2. Innes, Arthur. D, A Short History of the British in India, 1915, pp. 136-37.
  3. Political letter to Court of Directors, January 18, 1800 (NAI)

battalions in their services.<sup>1</sup>

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Wellesley was determined to combat the French influence in India. Under the subsidiary alliances concluded with the native states, he forced them to accept the English Company as a Paramount Power and to turnout all the French, employed with them. They were also forbidden from having any direct correspondence with the French. To keep a close watch on these native states, British Residents were posted at the courts of these rulers. The presence of the English troops was essential in the states for which the Indian rulers paid. All these measures were intended to combat French influence at the court of Indian rulers.<sup>2</sup>

For these measures he was applauded in House of Commons for counteracting with equal promptitude and ability, the dangerous intrigues and projects of the French in India.<sup>3</sup>

The beginning of the year 1802 marks a Watershed in the Governor-Generalship of Lord Wellesley. He had achieved unparalleled success as a conqueror and annexer. He had vanquished many a states, extended protection over Oudh, relieving her of important frontier provinces.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Martin, op.cit. Vol II, p.39.

2. New Cambridge op.cit. p.554

3. Sir Lyall, op.cit. p.214

4. New Cambridge op.cit. p.554

The extent of Wellesley's distrust of the French and his countermeasures against their machinations can not be better understood than from his instructions to the Resident at Oudh: "My principle is very simple: whenever I find a Frenchman in India, in this my power, I will send him back to Europe and I desire that you will adopt this principle as general rule of your conduct from which you are never to depart excepting in cases of a very special nature, which you will always report to me for my determination".<sup>1</sup>

In May 1802, Mr. Bosanquet, then Chairman of the Court of Directors, wrote to the Marquis Wellesley, informing him that the French Government was exceedingly jealous of British sovereignty in India, declaring his conviction that the peace recently made with France could not be lasting, and advising his excellency to be prepared for whatever might ensue upon its violations.<sup>2</sup> Such was the perception of the Company authorities about the Treaty of Amiens.<sup>3</sup>

In India Lord Wellesley in fact never liked the Treaty of Amiens providing for a restoration of French territories in India and had expressed his misgivings about a possible return of the French in his despatch to Court of Directors.<sup>1</sup> He also feared that the French might try

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1. Martin, op.cit. Vol. II, p.55

2. Beveridge, op.cit, p.739

3. Political letter from Court of Directors May, 1802(NAI)

4. Political letter to Court of Directors, February 28, 1803(NAI)  
(Also see Martin, op.cit. Vol. I, p.31)

to regain the lost position in north India by increasing their influence over the Mughal Emperor.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Treaty of Amiens was not upto the expectations of Napoleon, the First Consul was not willing to give up hopes about improving the French position in India. He was not inclined to take any rash step which would arouse English suspicions and endanger peace but at the same time he wanted his agents to make secret military and diplomatic preparations in India which could be utilized by the French on the next outbreak of war.<sup>2</sup>

For Napoleon, India was not an important issue to risk a war with England yet he felt that when a war broke out with England, the French in India could strike an effective blow on English in India. He was aware of the dangers involved in sending out to India, a large force to India which would at once arouse the suspicions of the English.<sup>3</sup> Instead he decided to nominate an enterprising General Decaen to take charge of the Indian possessions and placed the services of a large numbers of young officers, who would be able to train up a considerable body of sepoy force. The First Consul was enthusiastic about the Indian enterprise, although there was a growing realisation in

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1. Martin op.cit. vol IV p. 397

2. Sen, op.cit, p. 561

3. Nolan, E.H., History of British Empire, undated p.492

France about the futility of attempting a revival of French Political influence in India. There was apparently a general lack of enthusiasm and urgency in executing the plan of expelling the British from India. But the proposed French expedition to India under Decaen made the India House uneasy.<sup>1</sup>

Decaen received his instructions from First Consul on 15th February, 1803. Napoleon advised him to use diplomacy, tact and caution while dealing with the English in India.<sup>2</sup> He also advised him to provide for war while observing the stipulations of peace. Decaen was required to establish secret contacts with the Indian states and to lay down plans for any future war.<sup>3</sup>

On March 6, 1803 Napoleon allowed an expedition under Decaen to sail for India from France.<sup>4</sup> Soon the First Consul forgot these assurances and ignored all appeals from Decaen for timely reinforcement. No naval support was extended to Decaen apparently because the French commitments in Europe had preference over the plans drawn for India. As a result of indifferent attitude of Napoleon towards his repeated requests to send men and arms to India, Decaen returned to France without achieving any success.

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1. "Castlereagh avoided further argument by sending special information to Lord Wellesley for example that Decaen would sail for India with a squadron of French ships". Secret Committee Minutes, November 3, 17, 1802 (NAI)
  2. Nolan, op.cit. p. 492
  3. Secret Committee Minutes, March 16, April 4, 1803 (NAI)
  4. Sir Lyall, op.cit. p.224

Till 1802 the Maratha confederacy remained the only formidable power confronting Lord Wellesley. The Maratha sovereignty stretched from the shores of Malabar to the confines of the Punjab, holding sway in North India, furnished sufficient scope for French manipulations.

The Peshwa was supreme in nominal authority but Daulat Rao Scindhia might be considered rather as the Chief Sovereign in India than as a Maratha Chief owing allegiance to the Peshwa.<sup>1</sup> The Peshwa who had usurped the power of Raja of Satara though still professing to be his Chief Minister, was losing control over the great military Chiefs such as Scindhia and Holkar who were behaving like independent territorial princes. The instability of Maratha politics provided ample opportunity for British intervention.

Baji Rao, the Peshwa as a result of internecine strife, fled to Bassein in 1802 to seek help which Wellesley was eager to give. This won Lord Wellesley the appreciation of Castlereagh who wrote:

"I congratulate your Lordship on having perfected the only great work remaining incomplete towards the pacification of India and the establishment of the British dominion in that part of the globe".<sup>2</sup>

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1. Nolan, op.cit. p.492

2. Home Misc., 505 f 62, May 14, 1803 (NAI)

Even Mr. Barlow, one of the Directors praised the statemenship of Lord Wellesley. He wrote a note to the Governor-General: "It is absolutely necessary for the defeat of (the French) designs that no native state should be left to exist in India which is not upheld by the British power, or the political conduct of which is not under its absolute control".<sup>1</sup>

In the diplomatic transaction which followed the treaty of Bassein was conceived and executed and the road opened for the attack on "the French army of Hindustan" which the Governor General had so long desired. Lord Lake, the Commander-in-Chief was ordered to make preprations for war. Lord Wellesley laid down the following objects to be attained by force of arms:-

1. The seizure of all Scindhia's possessions between the Ganges and the Jumna: in other words, Perron's "Jaidad!"
2. To take the person of the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam under British protection: he was at the time in Perron's custody.
3. The immediate reduction of forces under the command of Perron.
4. The formation of alliances with the Rajputs and other inferior states beyond the Jumna for the purpose of

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1. Hutton, op.cit. p.90



excluding Scindhia from the northern districts of Hindustan: these states were tributary to Perron.

# 5. The occupation of Bundelkhand.<sup>1</sup>

It is very plain to see that the objective of the campaign was nothing more or less than Perron. Without the Frenchman there would have been no war at all: it was this brigade which gave Scindhia confidence to resist and the British Government the incentive to attack. As witness the Governor-General's note on the subject:—"M.Perron's forces are said to be at present collected at Coel (Aligarh) and to consist of about 8,000 infantry and an equal number of cavalry."<sup>2</sup> These refer to the local at Coel (Aligarh) only, for in Lord Wellesley's "History of the Mahratta War" Sindhia's army regular and irregular, in June, 1803 was estimated as follows:

<u>Name &amp; Description of the Brigade</u>	<u>No. of Battalions</u>	<u>No. of men</u>	<u>No. of Guns</u>
1st Brigade, M. Louis Bourquin	8	7,000	50
2nd Brigade, M. Hessing	7	5,600	50
3rd Brigade, M. Pohlman	8	6,000	80
4th Brigade, M. Dudrenec	7	5,000	70
5th Brigade, M. Dudrenec	7	4,000	
Corps under M. Dupont	4	2,000	20
Corps under Major Brownrigg	5	2,250	30
Corps under Begum Somru	4	2,400	20
Brigade under Late Filoze	6	3,000	60
Brigade under Ambaji Ingliia	16	6,400	84
Grand Total:	72	43,650	464

1. Political letter to the Court of Directors, July 25 1803 (NAI)

2. Compton, op.cit. p.293

That force in this estimate is exclusive of the troops employed in garrisons, of irregular infantry Mewattis and others, the number of which is considerable.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Wellesley wrote to Lord Lake: "I wish you to understand that I consider the reduction of Scindhia's power in the North-west Frontier of Hindustan to be an important object in proportion to the probability of a war with France".<sup>2</sup>

He further wrote in a despatch to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Lake in which the following passage occurs:-

The defeat of Perron is certainly the first-object of the campaign. The Commander-in-Chief will consider what advantage can be derived from any negotiations with Perron or Hessing (for Agra). My opinion is that it might be dangerous to attempt any negotiation with any of Scindhia's officers until we shall be masters of the field..... The Rajput and Jaut Rajahas are disgusted with Mahratta rule, but their dread of Perron's power exceeds their wish to be relieved and the same observation applies to the Sikh Chief....."<sup>3</sup>

In a secret despatch to Lord Castlereagh, the Governor-General wrote: "The state of preparation required

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1. Ibid

2. Martin, op.cit., Vol.III, p.183

3. Governor-General to Lord Lake, July 18, 1803 (NAI)

by the position strength of Scindhia's French Corps, under the Command of M. Perron, has already compelled me to restore the native corps to the war establishment".<sup>1</sup>

Lord Wellesley further explained his opinion:

"The regular infantry in the service of Scindhia, under the Command of ~~European~~ Officers, is supported by funds derivable almost exclusively from the territorial possessions of the Chief, situated between the Jumna and the Ganges, and the mountains of Kamaon. A considerable portion, if not the whole, of the territory has been assigned to M. Perron, a French Officer who has succeeded M. de Boigne (Sic) in the Chief Command of Scindhia's regular infantry. M. Perron has formed his territory into an independent state, of which Scindhia's regular infantry may justly be termed, the national army. The inhabitants of the districts comprehended in M. Perron's Jaghir, consider that officer as their immediate sovereign, while the troops supported from the revenues of the country regard M. Perron as the immediate executive authority from which the army is to receive orders, subsistence, and pay. Possessing such means, M. Perron dictates with the authority of a sovereign state of a superior rank, and with the vigour of efficient military power, to the petty states occupying the countries to the southward of the Jumna

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1. Political letter to the Court of Directors, July 25, 1803 (NAI)

and by the terror of his name and arms holds in abject submission the Rajput States of Jeypore and Jodpur, together with the Jhauts and the state of Gohud, extending his influence even to Bundelkhand and to the country occupied by the Sikhs. Scindia retains no efficient control over M. Perron, or over his regular troops. Various instances must be familiar to your Excellency's knowledge in which M. Perron has either openly disobeyed or systematically evaded the orders of Scindia, especially in the late crisis of that Chief's affairs. M. Perron has for some time past manifested a systematic disposition to remove all British subjects from the command of Scindia's regular infantry, and to introduce French officers under his own immediate patronage. M. Perron is supposed to have amassed a considerable fortune and your Excellency is intimately acquainted with his anxious desire to retire to Europe and to dispose of his actual command, and of his territorial possessions to some person of the French nation. To these considerations it is important to add that M. Perron is in possession of the person of the unfortunate Emperor, Shah Allum and consequently is master of the nominal authority of that unhappy prince, and therefore, may transfer this valuable possession with his property of any other description, to any French adventurer or officer who may be enabled to complete such a purchase. Thus the coincidence of various extraordinary and uncontrollable accidents and the weakness of Scindia's personal character, have contributed to found an Independent

French State as the most vulnerable part of the Company's frontier. Under the influence of a succession of French adventurers, this state must be exposed to the intrigue of the French in India, and even to the ambition and hostile spirit of the person who now rules the French nation. Nor could an instrument of destruction more skilfully adapted to wound the heart of the British nation be presented to the vindictive hand of the First Consul of France. This French state actually holds possession of the person and nominal authority of the Mogul, maintains the most army of regular native infantry and the most powerful artillery existing in India with the exception of the Company's troops and exercises a considerable authority over the neighbouring states, from the banks of the Indus to the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna. In the present crisis when every circumstance announces the probability of a renewal of the war with France, and urges the necessity of resorting to every practicable measure of precaution and security, the safety of the British dominions requires the reduction of M. Perron's military resources and power, independantly of any question which might exist between Scindia and the British Govt."<sup>1</sup>

Lord Wellesly was also conscious of the unique position of the Emperor and feared that "Shah Alam might form a dangerous

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1. Governor General to Lord Lake, July 27, 1803 (NAI)

instrument in the hands of any state possessing sufficient power, energy and judgement to employ it in prosecuting views of aggrandizement and ambition".<sup>1</sup>

In pursuance of this policy, the British Government offered "protection to the Mughal Emperor while the war was in progress".<sup>2</sup>

The Emperor was assured "every demonstration of respect and every degree of attention"<sup>3</sup> and an adequate provision for the support and maintenance of the royal household. Shah Alam was "favourably disposed towards this offer".<sup>4</sup> He was however firmly under the control of Perron and he was stated to have expressed his intention of "taking the field against the British".<sup>5</sup>

Moreover the Treaty of Bassein was not approved by Scindhia. According to this treaty the Peshwa, with the British support, was to be restored to Poona in 1803. Scindhia, however was unwilling to give the British so much influence there.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the indication of French influence

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1. Martin, op.cit. Vol. IV, p.397

2. Governor-General to Shah Alam, July 27, 1803 (NAI)

3. This communication was made through Syed Reza Khan, who was the agent of the Resident with Scindhia at the Court of Delhi. Colonel Collins was then the Resident with Scindhia.

Lord Lake to Governor-General, August 8, 1803 (NAI)

4. Shah Alam to Governor-General, August 12, 1803 (NAI)

5. Lord Lake to Governor-General, September 1, 1803 (NAI)

6. New Cambridge, op.cit. p.554

at the Court of Scindhia, provided Wellesley with ample justification for intervention.<sup>1</sup>

He was at war with Scindhia by August 1803. Lord Lake set out from Kanpur and reached the gates of Aligarh.<sup>2</sup> The position, Perron had taken up, was a strong one and favourable for defence, the front being covered by an extensive swamp which was unfordable in any parts whilst his right flank was protected by the fortress of Aligarh and his left drove considerable advantage from the nature of ground.<sup>3</sup>

No sooner had General Lake fired a few rounds than Perron's force turned and fled away. Perron himself retreated to Agra where his family and his amassed wealth in precious stones and jewels had been kept. The following day, 30th August, General Lake sent a summons to Colonel Pedron to surrender Aligarh. Pedron was not disinclined to listen to terms but he simultaneously received a letter from Perron who wrote:-<sup>4</sup>

"To Colonel Pedron"

Sir, - "You will have received the answer you are to make to the propositions of General Lake. I never could have believed that for an instant you could have thought of capitulation.

"Remember you are a Frenchman, and let no action of yours tarnish the high character of the Nation.

"I hope in a few days to send back the English commander as fast or faster, than he came. Make yourself perfectly easy on the subject. Either the Emperor's

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1. Political letter from General Lake to Colonel Collins July, 1803 quoted in  
Torrens, Empire in Asia 1979, p.189

2. See the map.

3. Compton, op.cit. pp. 300-01

4. Quoted in Compton, op.cit. p.302

army or the army of General Lake shall find a grave before the fort of Alyghur. Do your duty; and defend the fort while one stone remains upon another.

"Once more remember your nation. The eyes of millions are fixed upon you.

"I am, etc.

"C. PERRON".

General Lake finding his summons disregarded, and his terms refused, assaulted Aligarh on 4th September, 1803.<sup>1</sup> In the course of an hour, the British had made themselves masters of a fortress, long deemed impregnable. The total British loss, killed and wounded was 223, that of the garrison killed alone not so much by the sword of the assailants as by desperate attempts to escape, exceeded 2000.<sup>2</sup> Pedron was taken a prisoner and sent back to France.

On 7th September Perron withdrew from the service of Scindhia and was imparted a safe passage to Chandernagore. Now Wellesley turned his attention towards Delhi where the Mughal Emperor was under the protection of French.

Bourquin, the successor to Perron, offered a feeble resistance to Lord Lake at Delhi. He captured Delhi, the Mughal Capital.<sup>3</sup> The defeat put an end to the French machinations at the Mughal Court.

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1. See illustration.

2. Beveridge, op.cit. p.760.

3. The loss of the British Killed and wounded was 409, that of the enemy was roughly estimated at 3000 on September 11, 1803. Ibid. p.761.



Now the British became the masters at Delhi. Shah Alam was eager to avail of the protection, earlier offered by them. The Governor-General considered the emancipation of the Emperor from the clutches of the Marathas, an important result of the war. He wrote to Shah Alam, the Mughal Emperor: "Among the inestimable benefits resulting from the brilliant victories obtained by the British troops over the armies of Daulat Rao Scindhia and of Perron, I have derived the most cordial satisfaction in accomplishing the deliverance of your Majesty and your royal family from the indignities to which your Majesty and your household have been subjected by the violence injustice and repacity of those who have forgotten the reverence due to your royal person and illustrious house."<sup>1</sup> From Delhi Lord Lake set out for Agra to smash the French battalion, stationed there. Dudrenec, the French Commandant went over to the English side before the beginning of battle. Consequently the French force surrendered tamely. Agra was besieged and captured.<sup>2</sup> Thus the British did away with the French influence in the Delhi-Agra tract, with ease.

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1. Martin, op.cit. Vol. IV p.372

2. On 12th October about 2500 men surrendered. Within the fort were found tumbrils laden with treasure to the amount of 22 lakhs (£222,000), together with 164 pieces of ordnance, 76 of them brass and large quantities of ammunition and stores. Among the ordnance was one enormous brass gun which for magnitude and beauty stands unrivalled. Its length was 14 feet 2 inches, its calibre 23 inches, the weight of its whole body 96,600 lbs or little above 38 tons (See its illustration) General Lake meant to transport it to Calcutta and thence to England, but it proved too heavy for the raft, on which it was placed and sunk in the river.

Beveridge, op.cit. p.764

In the final battle at Laswari,<sup>1</sup> Scindhia's seventeenth battalion of French trained infantry, supported by French artillery, sustained a crushing defeat on November 1, 1803.<sup>2</sup>

The result of the action was never in doubt as nearly all the senior French Officers of the Scindhian army led by Perron, had earlier deserted their master, leaving the command in the hands of inferior and incompetent men.<sup>3</sup> With the decline in the power of Scindhia, all French machinations in India petered out. The French territorial possessions were destroyed and the British influence was established in the North.

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1. See the illustration.

2. The British loss amounted to about 800 but the victory though dearly purchased, was most complete except the 2000 prisoners, the whole of enemy's battalions to the amount of at least 7000 men lay dead on the battle field. Most of the cavalry shared the same fate.

Beveridge, *op.cit.* p.767.

3. Lord Lake to the Governor-General, November 2, 1803 (NAI)

As a result of the Treaty, Napoleon converted the Russian Emperor from an enemy into an ally of France.<sup>1</sup> This enabled the French Emperor to secure the active collaboration of Russia in expelling the British from India.

Consequently the Francophobia dominated the foreign office of England and the imagination of the British officials at the helm of affairs in India. Lord Minto, the Governor-General devoted greater attention to foreign policy. He gave effect to what had already been initiated by Lord Wellesley. In the past, Lord Wellesley had sent embassies to Persia and even spread intrigues in Sindh and the Punjab.<sup>2</sup>

Captain Malcolm was sent to Persia and had the task of involving the Shah of Persia in his favour, so as to check the French threat through the Punjab and Sindh.<sup>3</sup> However, the Treaty of Tilsit upset the plans of the British who feared a combined Russian and French attack upon India.<sup>4</sup> The British stood alarmed and cautious. Napoleon was determined to annihilate the British Empire by a drive into India with the help of the Russian Cossacks. He felt that it would be easier

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1. Fischer, H.A.L., Studies in Napoleonic Statesmanship, Germany, 1903, pp. 144-45
  2. Kastury, N., History of British occupation, undated pp. 149-50
  3. Pottinger, H., Travels in Beloochistan and Scinde, 1816, p. 4
  4. Kaye, Lives of Indian Officers, Vol I, 1883, p.169 and Vol IV, 1883 p. 41.

for him to transport an army from Paris to Delhi than from Boulogne to Falkestone.<sup>1</sup>

French threat to British interests, appears to have been greatly exaggerated, yet the effect of such a state of mind had a powerful influence on British statesmen.<sup>2</sup>

It was evident from the anti-French decisions taken by the British at that time.<sup>3</sup>

Lord Minto, the successor of Sir Barlow, was also overtaken by the dreadful Francophobia. A couple of months after his advent, he received information about General Gardane's anti-British activities in Persia and the establishment of French predominance, in the Councils of Tehran. This was considered highly inimical to the British interests in India. Lord Minto was apprehensive that France would invade India through Persia; and that she had already made considerable progress in the furtherance of that project.<sup>4</sup>

Lord Minto also believed that so long as France would remain engaged in the continental war, she would not be in a position to implement her intended project. But in the event

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1. "I detest the English" said Alexander, embracing Napoleon "as much as you do and I will uphold you in anything, you, attempt them". 'In that case' Napoleon replied, "Peace is concluded."  
Williams, Henry Smith, The Historians' History of the World, Vol XIII, 1951, p. 562.
  2. Marriott, J.A.R., The Eastern Question, 1956, p.185.
  3. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, February 9, 1808 (NAI)
  4. Marriott, op.cit., pp. 203-4.

of the continued submission of the subjugated powers of Europe, the French troops would be free for military adventures in India which might not be beyond the scope, energy, ability and perseverance of the French Emperor.

The French were desirous of utilising the neighbours of India in the Persian Gulf as a base for smashing British power in India and establishing French influence instead.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, in order to alienate Persia from the influence of France, Lord Minto decided to despatch a mission with full powers to negotiate with Persia. A mission in whose talents, Zeal and ability, he could repose confidence to perform such a delicate and important task.<sup>2</sup>

The East India Company authorities in London had received information about the disputes between the Ameers of Sindh and Afghanistan, and the despatch of Vakeels by the former to Shah of Persia for seeking his help against the ruler of Kabul, and promising to pay tributes to him<sup>3</sup> on the attainment of freedom from the Afghan Yoke. The French agents in Persia took advantage of the presence of the Vakeels of Sindh.

They utilized the opportunity and tried to secure the concurrence of the Sindh government for the admission of French ships into its ports. The Government of India was

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1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, February 9, 1808 (NAI)
  2. Minute of Lord Minto, January 30, 1808. F.D., Secret and Separate January 30, 1808, Cons 1. (NAI)
  3. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, March 31, 1808 (NAI)

under the impression that the talks between the French and Sindh were under way to reach an agreement.<sup>1</sup>

These diplomatic negotiations in Persia further alarmed the British in India and convinced them about the French invasion on India. These developments made the British officials uneasy.<sup>2</sup> The danger seemed real to them. The British could not countenance the idea of French ships using the ports of Sindh. It posed a potential and perpetual threat to British interests in India. The British were baffled by the French designs which were more imaginary than real.

Lord Minto immediately took some urgent steps to secure British interests. He was not prepared to give any foothold to the French in Sindh which might be used as a springboard to dislodge the British from India. He sought to prevent the assistance of any Indian state to further the French designs.<sup>3</sup> With this end in view, he attempted to renew friendly relations with the Sindh in order to thwart the French from taking the alleged concessions which might give a foothold to them on the north extremity of India and a jumping ground for implementing their proposed invasion of British India.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, March 31, 1803 (NAI)
  2. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, April 18, 1808 (NAI)
  3. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, March 31, 1808 (NAI)
  4. Ibid.

The series of French alliances from Persia to Sindh was the most disturbing factor, fraught with most dangerous consequences for British shipping and commerce, and to their growing political hegemony in North India.

To give effect to his determination, he despatched a confidential emissary to the Ameers of Sindh, with definite guidelines to ascertain the real nature and extent of the negotiations between the French and the Government of Sindh.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Minto thought that it would be an effective means to obtain authentic information of the nature, extent and progress of the French schemes in the North India, ranging from the Kashmir to the Punjab. Lord Minto in order to meet any unforeseen eventuality even ordered for military preparedness.<sup>2</sup>

Minto was guided by the assumption that a French expeditionary force towards the confines of North India was imminent. Therefore, political expediency demanded to meet the impending danger with prudence and precaution.<sup>3</sup>

In England the Franco-Russian coalition was viewed as a great and imminent danger to the frontiers of India.

Therefore, under Lord Minto the policy of counter acting

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1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, April 18, 1808.(NAI)

2. Ibid

3. Secret letters to the Court of Directors, March 31, 1808(NAI)

the Napoleonic threats and of providing a barrier against the threatened French advancement through the Punjab and Sindh, was further developed.<sup>1</sup>

The British possessions in East were an object of envy and jealousy to the French. The acknowledged naval superiority of England rendered it impossible to strike a blow at her by sea. The defeat of Napoleon at Trafalgar was the pointer in this direction. At the same time the result of the recent campaigns in Europe rendered it likely that France might make an attempt against the British in India by land.<sup>2</sup> The British could not therefore, remain indifferent to French designs.<sup>3</sup>

The British had already established their trading monopoly on the East.<sup>4</sup> It is an irony of history that it was the French rivalry which accelerated the progress of British conquests in the eastern world.

Commercially also Napoleon's economic war with England was also responsible for the acceleration of economic

1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, April 18, 1808 (NAI)
2. Lord Metcalfe held ~~sadly~~ "our situation in India had always been precarious. It is still precarious not less so perhaps at the present moment by the fault of the system prescribed by government at home than at any former period. We are still a handful of Europeans governing an immense Empire, without any firmhold on the country, having warlike and powerful French menace on our frontiers and the spirit of disaffection dormant but rooted universally among our subject."
- Kaye, J.W., Lord Metcalfe, Selections from Papers, 1853 pp. 92-93
3. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, May 30, 1808 (NAI)
4. Ibid.



exploitation of India. Therefore, their Indian possessions became very valuable and significant for them and hence demanded greater political control and extension of British power in India. The British retaliated against the Continental System by issuing the Orders-in-council which prohibited the neutrals from trading with ports from where the British goods were excluded. The immediate consequence of this was that England succeeded in establishing a temporary monopoly over all sea borne commerce, espacially of the invaluable trade with India.

The Continental System had a devastating effect on Napoleon's power and reputation in Europe. In enforcing the blockade Napoleon over extended borders of his influence. The occupation of Spain in 1808 to compel the Iberian Peninsula to close its ports to Britain, was a serious mistake; it started the Peninsular War, resulting in a constant drain on French resources.<sup>1</sup>

Although French proposals for the partition of Turkey and a joint expedition to India had already been made to the Czar, they were probably little more than political devices to hold on his wavering allegiance. In spite of the Erfurt meeting between the two Emperors in September, 1808, the French hegemony established at Tilsit, was growing weaker.

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1. Lee, Stephen, J., Aspects of European History (1789-1980), 1982, p.32

The Spanish rising had caused a profound change in the political situation of Europe, much to the disadvantage of France. Early in 1809 the Governor General in India received news about the favourable turn of events to England at the Continent. The Governor General felt convinced that the situation required a revision of his policy and the arrangements earlier made to face the early designs of France, had also undergone a change.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon's project of a second eastern expedition also collapsed. The Spanish insurrection and the weakening of the France-Russian alliance increased Napoleon's involvement in Europe and forced him finally to turn his thoughts away from the proposed overland invasion of the British possessions in India through the Sindh and Punjab. All apprehensions of French armies marching across India through the Northern India using the land route ceased, and the emergence of Great Britain as the victorious power in Europe changed the entire course of the policy of the East India Company towards their French enemy in the eastern world.<sup>2</sup>

At the commencement of his administration, he was full of dread of an impending French invasion of India. It haunted the imagination of British administration, but by the end of

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1. Governor General in Council to the Secret Committee  
January 20, 1809 (NAI)

2. Ibid.

his tenure France had forfeited all its acquisitions east of the Cape. Let us see how it was achieved by Lord Minto through his diplomacy.

### Diplomatic mission

The North Indian territories of Punjab and Sindh were most vulnerable in the eyes of British authorities in India for any French advance in this region. The Governor General Lord Minto wanted to use these two states as buffers in order to safeguard the frontiers of the East India Company. In his perception, these two states in league with France would prove very threatening to the interest of the Company.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Lord Minto did not leave anything for chance. His endeavour was to keep the French danger away from the British territories and meet it outside their borders.

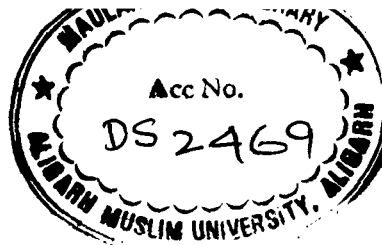
Lord Minto was of the view that rigid neutrality of his predecessor and his purely defensive attitude had proved to be ineffective.<sup>2</sup> In the changed scenario he found the earlier policy meaningless and unnecessarily risky.

It was destined to lead the British into a vortex from where escape without positive damage to British interests was impossible. Therefore, Lord Minto acted in a fit of Francophobia, as well as in a spirit of realism. He despatched

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1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, April 18, 1808 (NAI).

2. Ibid



missions to Sindh and Punjab lying on the north extremity of British India. He decided to create an effective barrier against the French inroads in the Punjab and Sindh. This was a carefully prepared scheme to counteract French designs in the region.

The Court of Directors and the Foreign Office of England had also realised the gravity of the situation and concurred with Lord Minto's policy of counteracting the French danger to India by taking over the border states into greater confidence and incorporating them into a chain of definite defensive alliances.<sup>1</sup>

(a) Metcalfe's Mission to Lahore

Having obtained the concurrence of White Hall and the India House, Lord Minto despatched a political mission to Lahore. He selected Charles Metcalf, a very talented official possessing abilities of a statesman. He was required mainly to counteract the alleged French designs of an attack on India by wooing Maharaja Ranjit Singh to an alliance. Metcalfe was also instructed to prevent the Sikh Chief from extending his territory to the Cis-Sutlej region on French prompting.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Secret letter to the Court of Directors, September 14, 1808 (NAI)
  2. The opinion of Kiernan is illuminating, "The negotiations with Ranjit Singh were in fact so little on French affairs that it might be permissible to suspect Napoleon of being in this case a mere red herring and the mission of being sent to initiate a penetration of the Punjab." Kiernan, V.G., Metcalfe's Mission to Lahore, 1985, p.5.

Metcalf was received at Kasur by Maharaja Ranjit Singh who was however apprehensive and suspicious about the motives of this mission. The British emissary stated that the friendship which subsisted between him and the British, had induced Lord Minto to depute him in order to communicate some important intelligence with which the Maharaja's interests were materially concerned.<sup>1</sup>

He told him that the British Government had received reliable and authentic reports that the French, who were endeavouring to establish themselves in Persia, had planned the invasion and seizure of Punjab.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, considering interests of the British and the Maharaja identical, the Governor General of India had commissioned him to negotiate with him some arrangements, to meet the French threat as their common threat.<sup>3</sup> Several meetings took place, some between the envoy and the Maharaja and others between him and the Maharaja's principle ministers. Nothing tangible came out as serious differences of opinion cropped up between the two parties. Maharaja wanted a close alliance between the Lahore Kingdom and the British Government, whereas Metcalfe saw in these proposals the expansionist designs of the Maharaja. Metcalfe remained evasive and unconvincing about them.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Sept. 23, 1808, F.D. Secret and Separate, Oct. 17, 1808, Cons. 19 (NAI).
  2. Ibid
  3. Metcalfe to Edmonstone Sept. 28, 1808, F.D. Secret and separate, Oct. 17, 1808, Cons. 20 (NAI).
  4. Ibid

Meanwhile the Sikh Chief Crossed the Sutlej and encamped at Khai, a village about 12 miles inland. Metcalfe followed him and had a meeting with him there, in which again there was no progress or any appreciable advance. On October 4, 1808, the Sikh Chief advanced from Khai to Faridkot disregarding the protests of the British envoy who stated that the aim of his mission was to negotiate a settlement and not to accompany him on his military campaigns.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Metcalfe submitted the draft proposals of the proposed treaty. Its provisions envisaged firstly, a defensive alliance between the British India and the Punjab against France in the event of a Napoleonic invasion, secondly free passage and assistance to the British army should it be necessary to meet the enemy at the Indus or beyond.<sup>2</sup> Draft Treaty contemplated an alliance only against the French invasion which was the principal concern of Lord Minto.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, Ranjit Singh could clearly see through the British game of expansion and the French threat was merely a pretext and nothing more. Therefore, Maharaja Ranjit Singh neither loved it nor hated it; he rather feared the East India Company as a formidable power.<sup>4</sup> He was afraid

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1. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Oct.5, 1809 F.D. Secret and separate, Oct.31, 1808, Cons 2.(NAI)
  2. Plan of a Treaty transmitted by Metcalfe on Oct.4, 1808 F.D. Secret and separate, Nov. 14, 1808, Cons.15(NAI)
  3. Ibid
  4. Ranjit Singh is said to have once remarked. "I might perhaps drive the British(Ungrez Bahadur) as far as Allyghur but should be driven back across the Sutlej and out of my Kingdom" McGregor, History of the Sikh. Vol. II, 1846, p. 35.

of its presence on his borders. He clearly understood that it was preposterous to call the assurances and proposals of Metcalfe as defensive alliance against France.<sup>1</sup> Further it was absurd to think that it was the Punjab and not British India which would benefit by this alliance.<sup>2</sup>

Ranjit Singh's perception was that it was London and not Lahore, which was the enemy of France.<sup>3</sup> He was convinced about the British move to rope him in their alliance. Therefore, for his agreeing the British must pay for it and concede to his proposals. He impressed up on the British to accept his point of view, and in the meanwhile endeavoured to capture as much of the Cis-Sutlej territory as he could, pending the negotiations.<sup>4</sup>

Metcalfe's assurances did not interest Ranjit Singh. Considering it as the most opportune moment to extract concessions from the East India Company, the Lahore Chief submitted his own draft of a Treaty on October 8, 1808, consisting of three prepositions; firstly, asking for British non-interference in his disputes with the Kabul regime,

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1. Khushwant Singh, Ranjit Singh, 1962, p. 76.
  2. "All the advantages accrue to the British for the real object of a French invasion would be the British and not the Sikh" said Bhawani Das, the minister of Ranjit Singh 'No' answered Metcalfe emphatically "You do not know the French as I do. The French will destroy your independence". Ibid p. 83.
  3. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Oct 5, 1808, F.D. Secret and separate, Oct. 31, 1808, Cons. 2 (NAI)
  4. Khuswant Singh, op.cit. p.76

secondly, a perpetual alliance between the Lahore Kingdom and the British and thirdly, recognition of his sovereignty over the whole Sikh territory.<sup>1</sup>

Ranjit Singh knew very well that the British were approaching him under the French threat and they desired his help more than he really needed the British friendship in defending the northern borders. Metcalfe could not give any promise to Ranjit Singh regarding the connections with Kabul or the Cis-Sutlej.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, Ranjit Singh took full advantage of the British involvement in Europe at a time when the Napoleonic power was at its zenith.

The continental Europe was a source of worry to the British. Napoleon was casting his covetous eyes on the British possessions in India.

The Asiatic conquest was a dominant part of the Napoleonic grand design and Ranjit Singh was determined to embark upon enlarging his authority in the Cis-Sutlej area which was divided into petty independent Sikh Principalities. The most important of them were Patiala, Jind, Nabha, Kaithal, Ladwa, Khulsia and Thanesar. Ranjit Singh, having known the British involvement in Europe, annexed Ambala and brought

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1. Proposal delivered by Ranjit Singh to Metcalfe on Oct. 8, 1808, F.D. secret and separate, Nov. 14, 1808, Cons. 2. (NAI)

2. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Oct. 26, 1808, F.D. Secret and separate, Nov. 14, 1808, Cons. 20 (NAI).



Mehtab Singh, the Chief of Thanesar to submission. The Raja of Patiala exchanged turbans with the Maharaja and thus agreed to be friendly with him.<sup>1</sup> At Shahabad, the Chiefs of Jagadhri, Burea, and Radawar attended the Maharaja and offered nazars to him according to their means.<sup>2</sup>

Under these circumstances, Lord Minto sent a strong despatch of protest to the Maharaja, disapproving of his policy to subjugate the Cis-Sutlej territories.<sup>3</sup> He vehemently attacked the Maharaja's policy of expansion and advanced British claims on the states of that region. Lord Minto explained his position to Ranjit Singh that by the issue of a war with the Marathas during the reign of Lord Wellesley, the British Government became possessed of the power and rights in the north of Hindustan.<sup>4</sup> At that time, the Maharaja did not advance his claim on that region. It was also explained that even in the early phase of the British contact with Ranjit Singh, a communication was received from him by Lord Lake, proposing to fix the Sutlej as the eastern border of the Lahore Kingdom.

Lord Minto demonstrated this, in order to send a signal that Ranjit Singh was aware of the dependence of Cis-Sutlej region, on the power Paramount, north of Hindustan, at that time.

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1. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Nov.7,1808,F.D.Secret and separate, Nov.29, 1808, Cons.6(NAI)
  2. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, Nov.20,1808,F.D. Secret and separate, Dec.5,1808,Cons.8 (NAI)
  3. Note transmitted by Envoy to the Maharaja, Dec.12,1808, F.D.,Secret Cons.Jan.2,1809,Cons.94(NAI)
  4. Ibid

The contention of Lord Minto was that in accordance with the established custom, those Chiefs were and would remain under the protection of the British who were the successors of the Marathas in that region. This claim appeared to be a very far fetched and unsupported by any legal or customary practices. Lord Minto refused to accept the claim of Ranjit Singh over any Cis-Sutlej principality. Instead, he advised the Maharaja to return all the places subjugated by him to their former possessors and confine his armed forces to the right bank of the river Sutlej.<sup>1</sup>

So the extention of the Lahore Kingdom accross the Sutlej was not acceptable to Lord Minto. If conceded, Lord Minto believed the British territory would be coterminus with that of Ranjit Singh and would thereby subject its northern frontiers exposed to a "chronic state of invasion and disturbance".<sup>2</sup>

The advice of Governor General was not liked by Ranjit Singh and he was not prepared to accept it.<sup>3</sup> For some time, therefore, he felt greatly agitated and was in a state of indecision.

There was a meeting between the Maharaja and Metcalfe on December 21, 1808. The British envoy demanded the

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1. Note transmitted by Envoy to the Maharaja. December 12, 1808, F.D. Secret. Cons. January 2, 1809, Cons. 94 (NAI)
  2. Griffin, Lepel H.: The Rajas of the Punjab, 1873, pp. 118-20.
  3. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, December 18, 1808, F.D. Secret Cons. January 30, 1809. Cons. 102 (NAI)

return of the territories, annexed by Ranjit Singh.<sup>1</sup> The Maharaja, who did not want to be deprived of the opportunity to achieve his long cherished objective of Sikh unity, fretted and fumed and even threatened war. Ultimately he realised that his kingdom was unequal to the might British power and preferred to calm down.

On the contrary, the British Government became more inflexible and firm in its stand. Changed British attitude and posture was due to the turn of events in Europe.

Napoleon Bonaparte became entangled in the Peninsular war. The British were now no longer apprehensive of Napoleon Bonaparte reaching within striking distance of India and his menace was wearing away.<sup>2</sup> The Governor-General decided to send General Ochterlony to take on the turbulent Maharaja.<sup>3</sup> Ranjit Singh's long cherished desire of welding all the Sikh misals into a single polity was frustrated. He had to enter into a friendly alliance. The Treaty of Amritsar<sup>4</sup> was concluded in 1809 after protracted negotiations and fixed Sutlej as the eastern most boundary of Ranjit Singh's Kingdom.

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1. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, December 22, 1808, F.D. Secret Cons. January 30, Cons 105 (NAI)
  2. Narrain & Dutta, A Comprehensive History of India Vol XI 1985, p.391.
  3. Ochterlony received fresh intructions "The reduction or subversion of the power of that Chieftain (Ranjit Singh) which under other circumstances was considered an event highly desirable and expected to be a probable consequence though not settled purpose, of the approximation of our troops to the frontier of the Punjab is no longer of the same importance to our interests" January 30, 1809 (NAI)
  4. For full details, see Appendix C.

It committed the British to have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Raja to the northward of the river Sutlej and forced Ranjit Singh to forego all his recent conquests and to retain in his possessions no more troops than were absolutely essential for police purpose. The Treaty of Amritsar marked the beginning of the northward drive of British influence and military power beyond the river Juna which could not be finally completed till the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

British diplomacy was at its best. The British realised that under the guise of French menace, the turbulent Maharaja was tamed and with his amity, friendship and co-operation they would be able to face any foreign invasion from the North.<sup>1</sup> So the Sikh monarchy had been described as "Napoleonic in the suddenness of its rise, the brilliancy of its success and the completeness of its overthrow".<sup>2</sup>

The British achieved important landmarks for the East India Company. They were the outcome of fear and of a probable French drive towards India by the overland route, hereafter the Punjab, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh remained a buffer state between British India and territories beyond the geographical frontier of North India. The East India

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1. Metcalfe's correspondence No.36, November 8, 1809 (NAI)
  2. Griffin, Sir Lepel, Ranjit Singh, Rulers of India Series, 1898, pp. 91-92

Company became an unchallenged power-paramount in the vast subcontinent.<sup>1</sup>

(b) Smith's Mission to Sindh

After Lahore, Lord Minto made Sindh, a target of his expansionist policy. He realised the importance of having close friendly relations with the Ameers of Sindh whose territories were of immense strategic importance for British India.<sup>2</sup> Sindh was a maritime state with a vast harbour on the Arabian sea coast and a large water channel.

Geographically it was the nearest port of India to Egypt. Its land frontier was contiguous to the tribal belt of Baluchistan, across which existed two independent kingdoms of Afghanistan and Persia. The Ameer of Kabul was the political superior of Sindh while the other one, Persia, was a traditional enemy of Afghanistan and was gradually coming under the French influence.<sup>3</sup>

Napoleon Bonaparte's representative, General Gardane was actively engaged in his diplomatic manoeuvres to supplant British influence from Persia and to bring it into the French orbit.<sup>4</sup> Napoleon had instructed his envoy to Tehran, General

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1. Lyall, Sir Alfred, Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India, 1907, p.204
  2. Lambrick, H.T. Sir Charles Napier & Sindh, 1952, pp.7-8.
  3. Secret letter to Court of Directors, May 3, 1808 (NAI)
  4. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near & Middle East (1835-1914), 1956, pp. 78-81.

Gardane that his chief aim should be to form a triple alliance between France, Turkey and Persian for the purpose of opening out a road to India. He also directed him to ascertain what co-operation might be expected within the country particularly from the Marathas if India could be reached by a French army .

These geopolitical considerations and the determination to ward off even the remotest possibility of French danger to the British Empire in the East, and its over-seas trade on which depended the prosperity and power of the British nation, made it imperative for the East India Company to court the friendship of the Ameers of Sindh and to establish a strong barrier against the threat of a French invasion on the extreme fringe of northern India.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Seton was deputed as the British envoy to the Court of Sindh with definite instructions to establish friendly and cordial relations with the Ameers of Sindh and to seek their cooperation against the French advance towards the East. He was also instructed to demand the establishment of a British Residency and a commercial factory in their territory.<sup>2</sup>

Captain Seton made an offer of the closest co-operation

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1. Choksey, R.D., Mountstuart Elphinstone, 1971 pp. 125-26.
  2. Secret letter to Court of Directors, May 3, 1808 (NAI).

of British political interest with the state of Sindh and soon entered into a defensive arrangement, which eventually ended in the execution of a Treaty on July 18, 1801.

This Treaty imposed on each party an obligation to furnish military, at the requisition of the other, without any limitation or condition. Captain Seton signed this Treaty on the understanding that the Ameers of Sindh would ask for assistance of British troops only for repelling the advance of a French army towards that country and for no other purpose. But no specific mention of it was made in the Treaty. In doing so he acted in a hurry forgetting the obligations that the Treaty imposed upon the British Government to furnish its troops to Sindh even for other purposes, such as the attempt of the Ameers to resist the claims of the Court of Kabul for tribute.<sup>1</sup>

The British Government feared lest the Court of Kabul should misunderstand British motives in Sindh and thus develop and strengthen hostile relations with it.

On account of the Napoleonic threat, Lord Minto did not want to antagonise the neighbours of India such as the Kabul regime which could have sapped the British energy and

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1. Secret letter to Court of Directors, December 7, 1808  
(NAI)

strength.<sup>1</sup> The Governor General only wanted to keep the Punjab and Sindh away from the probable French influence to safeguard the interests of company.

The diplomatic conduct of captain Seton could have provoked the Kabul regime into waging a war against the British in India. This created apprehension in the mind of Lord Minto who was already alarmed after the execution of Treaty of Tilsit.

The Calcutta Government, therefore, disapproved of the conduct of Captain Seton and declined to ratify the engagement as it was likely to land the East India Company into serious political controversies on the Northern frontier.

Seton had not taken note of the other instructions given to him. The refusal of the East India Company to ratify this engagement, was disliked by the Ameers who did not even evince interest to establish amicable relations with the British Government.

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1. Lord Minto addressed a long and able letter to the Secret Committee in which he described the "impolicy and indeed impracticability of preserving in the cause of policy adopted two years before by his predecessor without incurring in very increased degree those very hazards and embarrassments which this neutral system proposed to avoid," December 15, 1808 (NAI)



They doubted British motives, and their minds were filled with anger and suspicion. Instead of forming a common cause with the East India Company, they sprang a surprise on it by demanding the recall of captain Seton. After the non-ratification of the treaty such a demand was quite natural. With a view to recover the ground, lost by Captain Seton in Sindh and to accomplish the objectives, originally proposed to him, Lord Minto there upon deputed Nickolas Hankey Smith as the new British envoy to Sindh.<sup>1</sup>

He was sent to annul the treaty.<sup>2</sup> The British mission was received well on its arrival in Sindh. After the exchange of formal courtesies, in which the British envoy gave an appraisal of friendly relations between East India Company and Sindh, he settled down to the real bussiness of his mission.

In strict conformity with the instructions of the Governor-General, the British envoy showed his keenness to befriend the Ameers of Sindh. He adopted least offensive attitude towards his hosts and apprised them of the views of the British Government and the aims of his mission.<sup>3</sup>

He thus tried his best to dispel from the mind of the Ameer, the fear that his government had hostile designs

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1. Edmonstone to N.H. Smith, November 28, 1808, F.D. Secret Cons. Oct. 17, 1809, Cons. 16 (NAI)
  2. Choksey, op.cit. pp. 125-26
  3. Smith to Edmonstone, October 1, 1809, F.D. Secret Cons. August 7, 1812 Cons. 5 (NAI)

in Cutch and to assure them of the best of British intentions to perpetuate friendly relations with their country.<sup>1</sup>

The assurance of Smith did not go far to convince the Ameers of Sindh and dispel the doubts about the British activities on the borders of their country, and that the despatch of the mission to their court was not motivated by any sinister design. Driven by self interest and determined to extend their sphere of influence in Cutch, the Ameers of Sindh proposed a slight modification, contained in a new explanatory clause, added to the original proposal.<sup>2</sup> They proposed to retain five-eighths of the annual revenues of Cutch with them and to offer three-eighths of it to the British Government, should it cooperate with them in the subjugation of Cutch. In the event of British disinterest to accede to their proposal, they accepted that the British Government would not oppose them in their efforts to establish their supremacy in Cutch. In this contingency alone, they expressed their willingness to conclude an agreement of offensive and defensive nature against the French, as proposed by the British envoy.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover in return for British cooperation in the subjugation of Cutch, they promised to allow the re-establishment

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1. Narrain & Dutta op.cit. p.295.

2. Smith to Edmonstone, October 1, 1809, F.D. secret cons. August 7, 1812, cons.5 (NAI)

3. Smith to Edmonstone, October 1, 1809 F.D. Secret Cons. August 7, 1812, cons.5 (NAI)

of a British factory in their territory.<sup>1</sup> These friendly proposals were appreciated by Smith but he was more interested in preventing the French establishment in Sindh than offering the British military help in subjugating Cutch.<sup>2</sup> The Ameers of Sindh wanted to take advantage of East India Company's concern about the French advance towards India through the Punjab and Sindh.<sup>3</sup>

The negotiations to execute a treaty with Sindh, had gone on for some time. Both the sides were adamant in extracting as many concessions as they could. The British wanted the promise of Ameers to keep away from the French.<sup>4</sup> The annexation of Cutch with the help of British was the target of Sindh. But this did not bring out an abrupt termination of negotiations for a friendly alliance with Sindh. As a result of protracted negotiations, the Ameers expressed their determination to agree to the restoration of British commercial relations with their country only on the condition of British help to them in Cutch.<sup>5</sup> However with regard to the proposal for a permanent British Residency in Sindh, they stated that they would accept only a yearly despatch of a British envoy to their country provided the British Government also agreed to admit a wakil at Bombay on similar terms.

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1. Ibid

2. Smith to Edmonstone, August 23, 1809, F.D. secret Cons. October 17, 1809, Cons. 16 (NAI)

3. Smith to Edmonstone, October 1, 1809 F.D. Secret Cons. August 7, 1812, Cons. 5 (NAI)

4. Smith to Edmonstone, August 23, 1809 F.D. Secret Cons. October 17, 1809 Cons. 16 (NAI)

5. Smith to Edmonstone October 1, 1809, F.D. Secret Cons. August 7, 1812 Cons. 5 (NAI)

At last the protracted discussions brought about an agreed settlement. On August 22, 1809 the Ameers deputed Akhund Muhammad Bucca Khan to propose the British envoy their decision to conclude a Treaty, having its basis on the principle that the friends and enemies of one state should be the friends and enemies of the other.<sup>1</sup>

Smith accepted the principle underlying the proposed Treaty and accompanied the Ameer's representative the same evening to that court where they offered a promissory engagement for Smith's concurrence which was agreed to him.<sup>2</sup>

Consequently, a Treaty of friendly alliance comprising four clauses, was signed on August 22, 1809. It was known as Treaty of Hyderabad.<sup>3</sup> It stipulated, firstly, external friendship between the British Government and the three Ameers of Sindh, Viz, Meer Ghulam Ali, Mir Kureem Ali and Meer Murad Ali, secondly, demonstration of the signs of enmity on either side against other; thirdly, mutual despatch of Vakils to each others capitals whenever necessary, without any obstruction from any side and; fourthly, prevention of the establishment of the French in Sindh.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Khera, P.M., British Policy towards Sindh, 1941 p.6
  2. Smith to Edmonstone, October 1, 1809, F.D. Secret Cons. August 7, 1812, Cons. 5 (NAI)
  3. See the appendix C for full details  
(The Treaty of Hyderabad had four clauses and only sixty eight words)
  4. The word "Tribe" is used by the British for the French possibly to show contempt for them or to impress upon the Sindh Ameers that the French were a backward tribal people and therefore undesirable,  
quoted in  
Khera, op.cit. p.6

The first two clauses of this Treaty were mere expressions of general friendship, the third opened the door for future consultations, discussions and negotiations between the two governments through accredited agents, and the last one prevented the admission of any French tribe into Sindh.<sup>1</sup>

This Treaty provided a barrier against the apprehended French invasion of India from the northern side, and prevented the possibilities of anti-British alliance between the French and Sindh. All the fears of the Francophobe British mind that Sindh might become a centre of French intrigues and conspiracies or a spring board for encroachments into the British territories, disappeared for ever. This provided security to the north frontier of British India.

The friendship with Sindh encouraged Lord Minto to concentrate on negotiations for friendly anti-French alliances with neighbouring countries such as Persia and Afghanistan to safeguard the British possessions in north India.<sup>2</sup>

The Treaty of Hyderabad did not prove very beneficial to the interests of Sindh. The only gains to them, from it were, the establishment of friendly relations with the

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1. Lambrick, op.cit. p. 12

2. Choksey, op.cit. 91

mighty British power in India and their satisfaction that they might be freed in future from any unduly aggressive designs of the Afghanistan.

Under the guise of Francophobia, the British checked the south east ward expansion of Sindh in Cutch. The British looked upon it with disfavour. Still the Ameers considered the Treaty of Hyderabad a privilege to have friendly relations with the British as they were not fully sovereign princes.

The relations between the British Government and Sindh did not develop during the later days of Lord Minto's administration in India. The realization, that Napoleon was enmeshed in dynastic intrigues and unable to extricate himself from the Iberian Peninsula, soon returned the affairs of Sindh to their original obscurity.

## C O N C L U S I O N

The news of the revolution in France stirred the French colonies in India; Chandernagore, in particular adopted a new constitution. In spite of this, Equality and Fraternity was denied to Indians. Moreover, the differences between the officials of Isle of France, Pondicherry and Chandernagore were more of personality clashes rather than any change in their policies and attitude.

The French in North India had been described by the India House, as agents of France, pursuing national interest and providing a plausible hope for the establishment of French political influence over a large part of India. Contemporary English opinion stood alarmed by the striking successes of French arms in Europe and the intrepidity of Napoleon Bonaparte magnified the threat to English power in India.

The letters and despatches of Wellesley show clearly the extent of anxiety felt by the British in India over the presence of large French trained armies. They were in a position to cooperate with any expeditionary force that might be sent from France. The causes for the second Anglo-Maratha war, were inherent in the English desire to eliminate the French menace from India.

In fact the French threat had rather been exaggerated by the British. Equally the political role of the French adventurers had also been magnified to a great extent. The careers of French adventurers clearly showed that their sole objective was to amass private fortunes as fast as they could and on their return to Europe, enjoy their wealth. Some of them did demonstrate Jacobinical leanings, but none of them had any definite political objective of establishing French power in India, either by their own resources or in co-operation with any expeditionary force that might be sent from France.

There is nothing to show that these adventurers had any contact or influence with the authorities of the Isle of France or with the Government of France. Down to the Treaty of Amiens there was, of course, no question of France sending an expeditionary force to India. But the correspondence of Napoleon during the Egyptian expedition and the instructions of the Directory show how little was really known in France about the position and resources of the French adventurers in India.

When Decaen was sent out to India in 1803 after the Treaty of Amiens, his instructions included just a vague suggestion about establishing, in a surreptitious manner, contact with the French in India.

Thus even before the destruction of the French forces



in the service of the Indian Princes, it does not appear that the plans of the French Government, regarding India at all depended on their cooperation. Nor were the French trained forces in the service of the Indian princes, so formidable by any means as was imagined by the India House.

They were certainly formidable against the indisciplined hordes of Pathans and Rajputs but were of no match to the English and their trained armies. They had neither the number nor the resources required to contest with the English for the supremacy in India. They had no cohesion in their ranks, on the contrary displayed their weaknesses at the first sign of danger. The rapidity with which Perron's army melted away in 1803 at Aligarh, and the pusillanimity with which most of the French officers hastened to make terms with the English in an effort to secure their private fortunes, shows despite the stiff resistance at Laswari, the real nature of the French menace.

The French adventurers were unable to shake the foundation of the English power in India. Finally the changes brought about during the seven years of Wellesley's leadership were so great that they are considered to mark an epoch in the development of the British power in India. There was a change in political climate and change in emphasis, which suited Wellesley, the ardent and enterprising Governor-General in India. It was in this favourable atmosphere that

Wellesley was able to pursue his own policy without apparent disharmony with the Home Government. His individual policy paid dividends. Consequently, French influence was removed from India forever.

We have seen how in spite of certain set backs, Napoleon did not cease to think about India, which continued to lure him. After the battle of Friedland in 1807, Europe stood prostrate before the military might of France and the foundations of Napoleonic Empire in Europe were firmly laid. At Tilsit, Napoleon made an alliance with the Czar in a bid to despatch a Franco-Russian expedition to India via the Punjab and Sindh.

Lord Minto, the Governor-General took an alarmist view. Napoleon's plan encountered serious obstacles in its way before it could succeed. These hurdles were the traditional hostility between Russia and Persia, the fluctuating relations between France and Russia, and the difficulties of transport and communication through land, dissected by deserts and mountains.

Lord Minto, the Governor-General in India underscored them, in his anxiety to safeguard the British possessions in India. He was committed to the policy of non-intervention and the European situation left no scope for any real deviation from it. The Peninsular war in Europe, pegged down Napoleon and forced him to abandon his proposed scheme to expel the

British from India. Lord Minto took full advantage of French involvement in Peninsular Europe to safeguard his northern frontiers by bringing the two border states, viz the Punjab and Sindh into the orbit of the East India Company in 1809.

After signing of the two treaties with the two frontier states, Lord Minto had established undisputed ascendancy in north India and thus eliminated the French threat to their empire. When war broke out again in Europe, in 1810 between France & Russia, apprehensions of a French invasion on India seemed impractical. England inaugurated the conquest not only of French possessions in the East, but even of those countries, whom Napoleon had forced to toe his Continental System. Lord Minto could boast that the British had neither an enemy, nor a rival, left from the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Horn.

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## Appendix A.

### Biographical Notes on French Officials and Adventurers

#### 1. Bourquin

He was a deserter from the French navy. After a chequered career, he rose to be a confidant of Perron. On the eve of the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Maratha War, he was at the Mughal Court to maintain a French brigade. Defeated by the British at Delhi, he surrendered to Lord Lake, the Commander-in-Chief in 1803.

#### 2. De Boigne

He entered the service of Scindhia in 1784. He was entrusted with raising two infantry battalions of 850 men each, equipped and trained in the European fashion. In 1790, de Boigne raised three brigades of 15000 regular infantry, 600 irregulars, 2000 guns and 600 Afghan cavalry. For the maintenance of these brigades, a vast area in the Doab, consisting of 52 districts and yielding a revenue of 22 lakhs of rupees, was assigned to him. He kept his base at Aligarh. He returned to Europe in 1795, carrying his amassed wealth during his stay in India.

#### 3. De Canaple

He had been a commandant at Mahe from November, 1787 to April, 1790. He returned to the Isle of France with the intention of returning to France. But he was appointed as

the commandant of Chandernagore. He died in Calcutta before taking his assignment at Chandernagore.

#### 4. Dudrenec

He entered the service of Holkar in 1791. He trained the Holkar army on European model. In 1801 driven by the hostility of Holkar, he joined the service under Scindhia. He was in charge of the fourth and fifth Brigades, consisting of 9000 soldiers and 70 guns. On the eve of the second Anglo-Maratha war, he followed the example of Perron and surrendered to Lord Lake at Agra.

#### 5. Dupleix

Joseph Francis Dupleix joined the French East India Company in 1720. He made Pondicherry the principal emporium of trade in South India. He was defeated by the British in 1756 and the French Government recalled him immediately.

He had dug for France, the foundations of an Empire which would, if built upon, have made her the arbiter of the East. He died in 1764.

#### 6. Frimont

He was the commander of the small French force at Chandernagore and was arrested during the Revolutionary troubles there. Released from detention, he had gone to Delhi to seek employment and was appointed commander of a brigade under de Boigne. He died in 1795.

7. Montigny

He was commandant at Chandernagore in 1789. He revived French trade and commerce, effected administrative reforms and augmented revenue. But he was disliked by the citizens for his autocratic behaviour. Subsequently the French Governor-General dismissed him.

8. Pedron

He was the commander of one of the brigades under Perron in 1803. He resisted the British army with his full might at Aligarh. As a result of that, his 2000 soldiers perished and he was taken a prisoner after the French rout at the hands of Lord Lake.

9. Perron

He came to India in 1780 as a common sailor. In 1789, he was given the command of the second brigade newly raised by de Boigne. In 1795 he took over from de Boigne, who returned to Europe. He enjoyed undisputed power for eight years. During this period the British feared him for he wanted to establish the French State in the Doab region. Prior to outbreak of second Anglo-Maratha war, he deserted the Scindhia and settled down at Chandernagore. He left for France in 1805.

## Appendix B.

### British Governors-General in India

#### 1. Lord Cornwallis (1786-93)

He was the first Governor-General of India, appointed by Parliament. He was a distinguished soldier though compelled to surrender York Town in the American War of Independence. During his term of office, the political sky was one of cloudy stillness before the burst of the French Revolutionary cyclone in Europe. He captured Chandernagore, the Chief French colony in north India in 1793 following the outbreak of Revolutionary disturbances in Europe. He negotiated the Treaty of Amiens in 1802.

#### 2. Sir John Shore (1793-98)

During his tenure, England was at war with France in Europe. Under these circumstances, he stuck to the policy of non-intervention in the affairs of princely states in India. But he was concerned about the perilous situation arising out of the activities of French adventurers under the Scindhia, Nizam and Tipu Sultan. Sir Shore was known as Baron Teignmouth.

#### 3. Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)

Perhaps there never was a Governor-General better informed about Indian Government than the Marquess of Wellesley. Since 1793 he had been a member of Board of Control. When he assumed office as Governor-General of India

there was uneasiness in London as well as in India over the French designs towards India. He was concerned about a possible attack on India, due to the exploits of Napoleon. Consequently he devised the subsidiary alliances, aimed at expelling the French from Native States. He defeated Scindhia at Laswari in 1803 and thus crushed the Maratha supremacy.

4. Sir Barlow (1805-07)

The Napoleonic threat forced him to adopt the policy of non-intervention in India. He reduced the company's commitments at a time when they could not be extended or even maintained at their existing limits because England was seriously threatened by Napoleon in Europe.

5. Lord Minto (1807-13)

He had much parliamentary experience and was well acquainted with Indian affairs before coming to India. He followed a middle way between interference and non-interference in dealing with Indian states. The Napoleonic invasion of Russia in 1812, rendered impossible the revival of the project of a Franco-Russian expedition to India.

6. Lord Hastings (1813-23)

Lord Hastings or Earl of Moira, at the age of fifty nine, came to India. He occupied the exalted office for a decade. His political settlement of Central India completed the annexationist policy of Wellesley. As a result of that, the contest with Indian states was practically over.



Text of the Treaty of Amritsar

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Treaty with the Rajah of Lahore, April 25, 1809

Whereas certain differences which had arisen between the British Government and the Rajah of Lahore have been happily and amicably adjusted and both parties being anxious to maintain the relations of perfect amity and concord, the following Articles of Treaty which shall be binding on the heirs and successors of the two parties have been concluded by Rajah Runjeet Singh on his own part and by the agency of Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, Esquire on the part of the British:

Article 1

Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British Government and the state of Lahore. The latter shall be considered with respect to the former, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Rajah to the northward of the River Sutlej.

Article 2

The Rajah will never maintain in the territory occupied by him and his dependents, on the left bank of the River Sutlej, more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of that territory, nor commit or suffer any encroachments on the possessions or rights of the Chief in its vicinity.

Article 3

In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles or of a departure from the rules of friendship on the part of either state, this Treaty shall be considered to be null and void.

Article 4

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This Treaty consisting of four Articles, having been settled and concluded at Amritsar on 25th day of April, 1809.

Seal and signature of  
C.T. METCALFE

Seal and signature of  
RAJAH RUNJEET SINGH  
(Sd) MINTO

Ratified by the Governor-General-in-Council, on 30th May, 1809.

Aitchison, C.U., A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads  
Vol VIII, 1909.

Treaty with the Amirs of Sindh, August 22, 1809

Article 1

There shall be eternal friendship between the British Government and that of Sindh, namely Mir Ghulam Ali, Mir Karim Ali and Mir Murad Ali.

Article 2

Enmity shall never appear between the two states.

Article 3

The mutual despatch of the Vakils of both Governments namely the British Government and Sindhian Government shall always continue.

Article 4

The Government of Sindh will not allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh.

Written on 10th of the month of Rujeeb-ool-Moorujub in the year of the Hegira 1224, corresponding with 22nd of August 1809.

(sd) MINTO

Ratified by the Right Honourable the Governor-General at Fort St. George, 16th November 1809.

(sd) N. B. EDMONSTONE  
Secretary

Aitchison, C. U., A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads  
Vol VII, 1909.

## A : Archival Records

1. National Archives of India, New Delhi

The relevant materials are to be found in the records of the Foreign Branch Proceedings (1784-1816) which contain the Foreign, Political, Secret and Miscellaneous despatches, exchanged between the Court of Directors of the East India Company at India House, London and the Governor-General in Council at Fort William in Bengal.

2. Pondicherry Archives, Pondicherry

The special importance of the Pondicherry is that the records (1665-1814) of the various French settlements and factories in India, have been gathered in eight volumes by Societe de l' Histoire de l' Inde Francaise. Fuller and specific references have been given in the foot notes of the text.

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